The Principles of Sahaj Marg

Vol. III

P. Rajagopalachari

THE PRINCIPLES OF SAHAJ MARG

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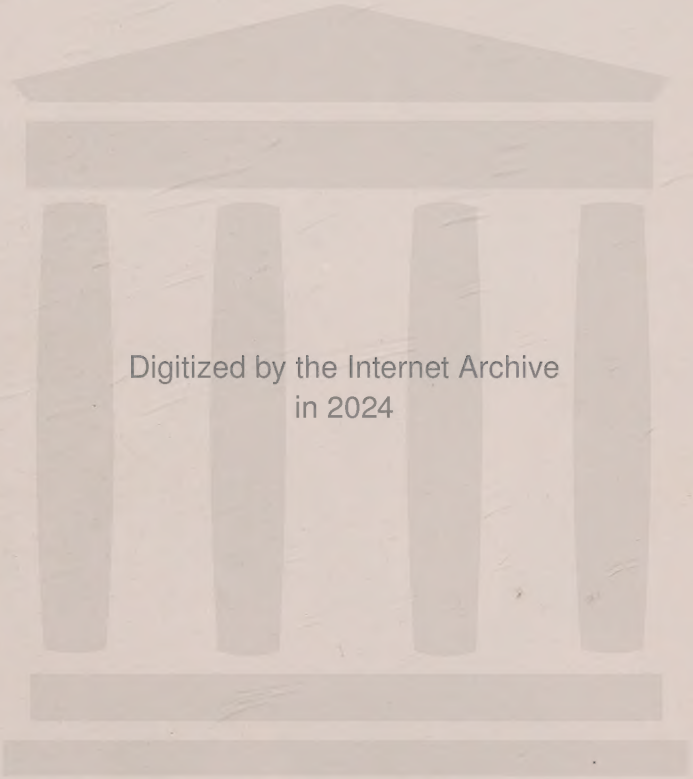
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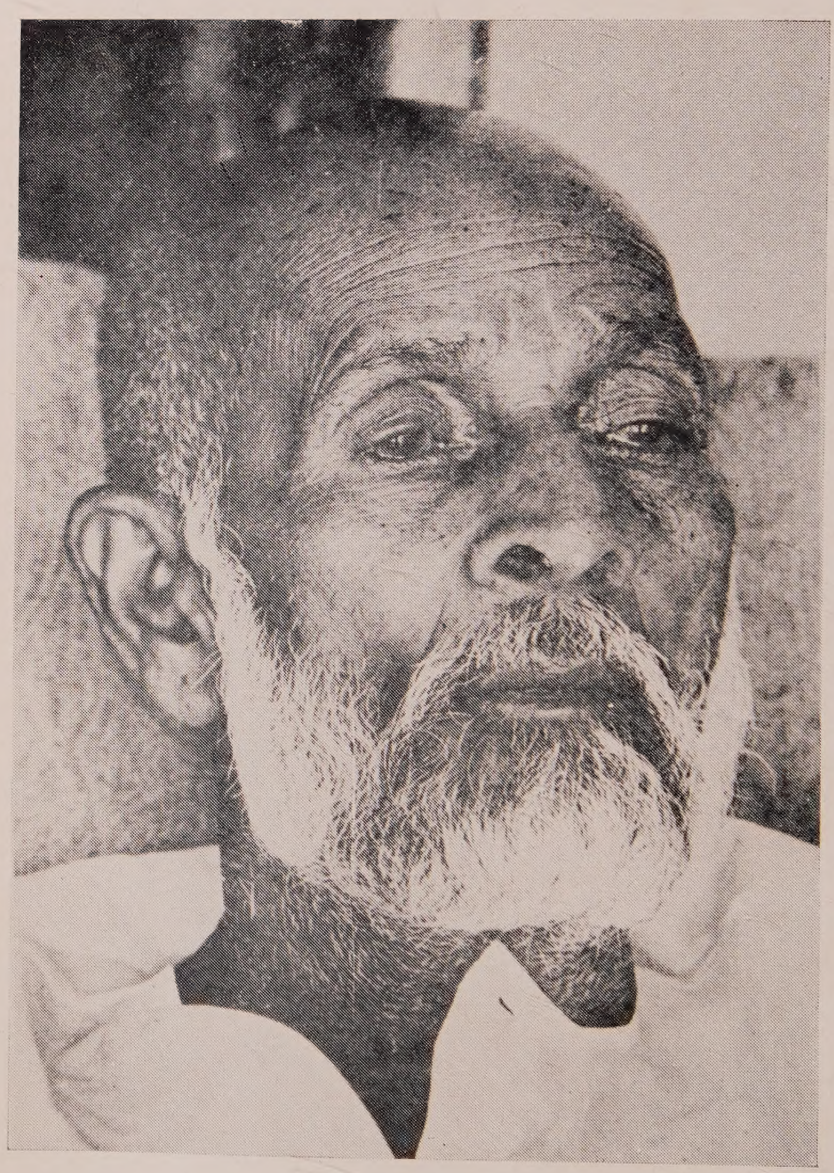

SHRI RAM CHANDRAJI MAHARAJ OF SHAHJAHANPUR
FOUNDER PRESIDENT
SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION

The Principles of Sahaj Marg

VOLUME III

By

P. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION
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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Volume III of 'The Principles of Sahaj Marg' comprises a series of talks/messages given by the President of the Mission, Rev. P. Rajagopalachariji, at various centres of the Mission in India, during the period 1983 to 1985.

After the Mahasamadhi of the Great Master Shri Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur in April 1983, Chariji, the former's Spiritual Representative and Successor, has been tirelessly undertaking extensive spiritual tours, to fulfil the holy task of assisting in the spiritual evolution of craving humanity assigned to Him by His Divine Master. During these tours, he has been addressing spiritual gatherings, talking on various aspects of Spirituality and particularly the Sahaj Marg System, as established by His Beloved Master. Transcriptions of these cassetted extempore talks at different centres, have become much in demand. This has resulted in our undertaking the work of publishing these talks, which have gushed forth spontaneously from his heart.

A careful reading of the 17 talks/messages, published in this volume will clarify different aspects of the basic teachings of the Mission, and help aspirants to have the right understanding of, and give support to, their practical sadhana. We are sure, therefore, that like the earlier two volumes, this volume will also create an urge in its readers to emulate the Author in adopting 'Sahaj Marg' as a way of life, duly establishing a connection with the

Divine Master, and strengthening this connection by bonds of love and devotion, thereby allowing it to reach its culmination in becoming a Perfect Being.

May His Grace flow into receptive hearts all over the globe; May He seed Divinity into all those who are willing to receive His Grace; May His Love nourish the thirsty souls and effect transformation in them, through His Divine Transmission, leading up to their Ultimate Goal of Mergence with Him.

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SHRI P. RAJAGOPALACHARIJI
PRESIDENT
SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION

1

BALANCED EXISTENCE

I am going to speak about the difficulty of Sahaj Marg; because I find all my brothers and sisters and the Ultimate Master Himself always saying that everything is simple. Of course, for Master nothing is difficult. "How to do this ?" "Concentrate !" "How to change ?" "Transmit !" "How to achieve God ?" "Turn your head from here to here, and He is there." So for about 20 years I have been bombarded with the simplicity of Sahaj Marg. But for every moment of those twenty years I have been facing the biggest problems : "How to change, how to do, how to transmit, how to correct, ourselves first, others later ?"

As in everything in life, there is a similarity between one end and the other end. In between, everything is different. The child is simple; the child is innocent; it does not have to speak; by just looking at its mother or weeping a little, it gets everything it wants. The old man also gets the same treatment. In between, we have to fight for everything that we have to get. Similarly in our Abhyas, particularly in our Sahaj Marg Abhyas, when we start our Sadhana (I won't say it is deceptively simple, but) the simplicity deceives us. Master used to say, "It is my simplicity that deceives." And when we come in with our enthusiasm, with some idea of the goal – we delude ourselves that it is the Goal. In most cases it is not the Goal at all ! We feel everything is simple; our Preceptors advise us it is very simple; Master adds to our problem by saying everything is so simple; and we are very happy. We say, "But if it is so simple, why not we try and get ?" And

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Talk at Raichur celebration on 9th October 1983 morning.

then Master says, "Someone achieved in seven years, Lalaji achieved in seven months." So we say "between seven years and seven months we should have". The first problem comes when He says He took twenty two and a half years for His own Perfection ! Then we say, "What is this, the Grand Master took seven months, someone took seven years under the Master, but the Master Himself took twenty two and a half years." This seems to be some sort of a contradiction that the Master should take more time than the abhyasi ! When you ask Him, He says, "It is very simple. You know I have to do this, I have to do that, but it is very simple I am telling you !" We say, "All right, the Master Himself has said, so it must be simple." When we sit in meditation we find we are not really meditating. We are thinking of something else. As someone said, when we sit in meditation the mind is in the office. When we are in the office, some abhyasi comes and we are talking of meditation. We run to our Preceptor : "Sahib, how to meditate ?" He says "Brother, don't you read the instructions in that small list – one sheet we give you ? There are only 3 things to do. Sit with your eyes closed; imagine there is a Divine Light in the heart (it is a mere suggestion); just put your mind over it. It is so simple." We are reassured. We come back and say "Brother ... has said, and so and so has said, Master has also confirmed, that it is really simple." "I am a fool, you see, because I have been struggling and I am not able to meditate." We do for 3 to 4 days, again we are not able to do something; rush to the Preceptors Patient people. Our Preceptors are to be praised for their patience, for their dedication. Instead of spending half an hour, he spends 2 hours, and tells us how simple meditation is : "What, there is nothing else ! It is the merest suggestion. Can we not even make the suggestion that there is light in the heart, and put our

mind on it ?" We say, "Yes sir, it is very simple. I must have been doing something wrong." He says, "Yes. Go and try again." We go home, reinforced by the simplicity of Sahaj Marg. Either we do it or we don't do it, some walk out, some few are fighting it all their lives. Some few who had the good fortune to have been associated very closely, in a very integrated way with the organisation (that means brothers and sisters, preceptors, Master Himself), in spite of their Sadhana they develop.

If I am convinced of one thing, after 20 years of Sahaj Marg practice, it is that we develop in spite of ourselves, in spite of the Sadhana that we are supposed to be doing because with my hand on my heart, I can tell you, I cannot claim to be a Sadhak of Sahaj Marg at all. It is Babuji's Grace. This creates a second problem : "Sir, if it is possible by Babuji's Grace, why should we undergo this torture of meditation, cleaning, night prayer ? Can He not give it to us also, if He can give you, if He can give it to the big people who have assembled here before us ?"

It is only Grace. Babuji Himself has said, "Sadhana does not confer on you any right to development." It is only something we indulge in, with faith, with devotion, with humility, to attract His gaze towards us. Only he whom He wants will achieve. Second complication : "I am a devoted abhyasi, Sir, I am doing meditation, I am doing cleaning, my preceptor also says that my condition is lighter, there is a glow in the heart. Yet Babuji looked at me like this and turned away ! Why ?" Preceptor says : "Grace must come. You see, there is no right conferred on anybody; least of all, us." How to get over this dilemma, of a practice which is supposed to lead us to the goal, but which at no stage (in the words of the Master Himself) confers on you the right to Reality or Realisation. It has to come at His choice. It is a very difficult problem. Along

with this problem, we have the associated problems — this concept of the two wings of the bird. The materially poor abhyasis look at the millionaire abhyasis and say, "Sir, I am a very faithful, devoted abhyasi. I don't get 30 rupees a month. If my spiritual wing is being strengthened, should not my material wing also be strengthened?" For instance, someone used the upamanam (example) of the tank, levelling of the level of the water — it is a misleading conception. It does not mean that a saint will become a millionaire or that a millionaire will become a saint. But when we read about it, when we hear about the two wings of the bird, there is a certain amount of self deception (mind you I am saying self deception — it is not the deception of the theory or the practice or the Master). We deceive ourselves into thinking that here is a system which preaches and which promises equality in spiritual and material attainments. It does not do anything of that sort. It only tells us what to do. It says attend to both halves of your life — the spiritual half of your life and the material half of your life. Don't ignore one side for the other. Don't ignore spirituality for material life, don't ignore the material life for the sake of spirituality. You attend to both. You will get what He wishes you to get, in both the spheres. If He wants you to be a saint and also a millionaire, you will become one. If He wants you to become a saint and remain a pauper, you will remain so. But your attention should be on both sides. This I find very few people have understood. They are always looking to better endowed people, comparing their own poor selves and saying, "Why I am not like him? He flies, I have to walk. He sits in the air-conditioned office, I am sweating it out in the fields. He is made a preceptor, I am not." So many problems; and you evaluate all these problems, and then

equate it with the need for material life, and the "apparent need" to devote more time to material life than spiritual life : "Sir, after all, if I have to look to my material life, if I have to look after my wife and family, I have to work eight hours in the office." Accepted. "It means I have to get up, have my shave, my bath, that takes one hour." O.K. "Evening when I come back I have to spend some time with my children, eat with them." Accepted. But where has Master said, "You spend twelve hours of the day in spirituality and twelve hours of the day in materiality ?" Master has only said : "One hour in the morning, half an hour in the evening, ten minutes at bedtime." So this one hour and forty minutes, that is hundred minutes total out of the whole day, is able to keep us in a balanced situation, as far as balancing the two halves of our lives is concerned. We mislead ourselves into thinking that Master has said that we should meditate all our lives forgetting the material life. He has not said so anywhere. So we find most abhyasis coming and saying, "Sir, I have no time." If you cannot find hundred minutes in twenty four hours just to maintain a balance, when are we ever going to find time ? So, this again is our own self deception that balance means apportionment of equal time; it does not mean anything like that. A thinker thinks for half a minute and he solves a problem, which solution an architect or builder puts into effect over probably eight months or one year.

Then comes the problem, why one progresses, another does not. This I have already told you in the beginning. Master has said, only he whom He wishes will get. "Why am I not the person whom He wishes for ?" This question we are all asking ourselves. See, years ago, when we were reading through the Gita, we found that in that situation of the Mahabharat, there were several categories of

people associated with Lord Krishna. Some took Him only as a human being. Some took Him purely as the Divine. Neither achieved the Ultimate. It was only Arjuna who loved Krishna at the human level, and who revered Him in the Divine level after He revealed Himself to him. He accepted Him in both levels, he could love Him in all His levels of Existence, — Transcendence, Ultimacy — he got. Similarly in our Mission we find many people approach Master as a human being, forgetting His Divinity; they remain stagnant. There are also unfortunately abhyasis who have taken Him only as the Divine, forgetting His human levels of existence. I don't think they have also proceeded much beyond the others. And what is it that makes you accept one individual both at the human and Divine level? It can only be Love ! If you love Him as a human being, Love leads to reverence. Whereas if you accept Him only as Divinity, there may be fear associated with your acceptance; an awe you see, the distance you create — "You see, He is God and I am man, there is always going to be a separation between us !" But if I treat Him only as a man and forget He is God, then I am going to have the problem of proximity, familiarity breeding contempt — "After all he is an old man, toothless, walking with a walking stick !" So when we sort of dissect Master into His two halves, of His material and His divine existence, we fall into this error. It is the happy few — (I don't know how many there are, perhaps there are many, I am not able to say) but it is those brothers and sisters of our satsangh who have been able to merge the Divinity of Master into His Humanity or vice versa, who have been able to go to some extent by His Grace. And if Master favours them, or apparently favours them, (because Master has said in 'Voice Real' such a Personality has no friend or foe; for Him there is no friend

or foe; He cannot have partiality towards one and not towards the other; there can be no selectivity in His approach; He cannot say, "To him I will give, to her I will not give," — such an attitude cannot belong to our Master — It is in His own words ! Yet, apparently He has favoured) then in our human minds we think He has favoured so and so, He has not favoured so and so.

"It is precisely because this man — he adores Me at the human level, serves Me at the human level, he loves Me as a human being, as a father — he also has accepted and recognised My Divinity. I am for him a complete Personality. I am the Purnathva" – so one who accepts Master as the Purnathva, the Purnathva has to accept him I mean, the Ultimate has no choice ! This is why I said that Sadhana can be an impediment if it is going to make us think of Him only as a man or only as a God. As we have to evolve from mere human beings, full of samskaras, ridden by samskaras to the bestial levels — if we have to evolve from that to the Ultimate Level which Master is holding up as our true Lakshya (Goal), it means that we in our lives have to encompass in our progress, 'The Two Ends' — The lowest Karma—samskara ridden, diseased imagination, diseased mind, diseased activities — from that level, we have to go to the Ultimate Godhead, where you can say this man has been divinised, he is now like — in every attribute — the Divine itself ! We have to encompass this whole spectrum of development from the grossest to the subtlest, and we have before us the Master who has done it in His lifetime, and who has come here precisely to show us what is possible. Now, what is the purpose of a Master coming here ? Can He not do it, sitting in His Vaikunta or wherever it is ? After all, He says "Sitting in Shahjahanpur I can transmit wherever you are. I can transmit to Venus, I can transmit to

Neptune." Such a Personality is spread out throughout the Universe. Why did He not do it ? Precisely to tell us, that a God can become a human being, without losing any single attribute of Divinity — to show us the way how we as humans (with every single dirty human attribute) can become like Him, Divinised. He comes in a human form, precisely to show us, "I am This that you have been seeking ! In me you will find everything that you should seek. I am the way. I am the Instrument of that Progress from yourself to what I am. See me, accept me, follow me, emulate me with wisdom, and you shall become like me." This is the message of His existence.

If in this message of His existence, we accept His example of a Human life on this earth segmented into parts, taking one but not the other, we have lost our Goal, we have lost the thread of our sadhana, we have lost the purpose of our existence. Otherwise, His existence is meaningless. Why on earth should a person like Him come to earth and suffer all that He had suffered ? A brother told you with much emotion, how much Master suffered in the last year of His life. What was the purpose of His suffering ? It too has a meaning. It only shows us : "Don't think that a Divinised person when He comes here is free of suffering." You see, this is the promise He has made in His literature : "A saint is the target of the world's sorrows." We read it and we are happy ! Why are we happy ? Not because He is the target of the world's sorrows, but because we hope, in some inner recess of our minds, that we will not have to share in those sorrows ! "Baba, He is there to take care of all those sorrows, let me be happy." This is our petty human mind which is willing to give all sorrows, miseries, sickness, disease, pain and frustration to the Master and we go to Him and beg for ourselves happiness, wealth, education and a good life !

The Master in His life has exemplified, has illustrated — physically and perceptibly to every single one of His abhyasis — what a human being can rise to, how it can be the Ultimate itself, and even — after having achieved it in the human frame, if you are worth the salt you are eating, and if you are worthy of being called an abhyasi, you have got to be prepared to face every single sorrow, every single obstruction, every single pain that the Master Himself has faced and suffered. This is the Real meaning of the two wings of the bird. I cannot look for happiness and avoid sorrow. I cannot look for success and avoid failure. I cannot look for pleasure and avoid pain. Am I willing to accept a life which — precisely because it is life — has within it everything that life holds ? We have the twins of existence — the Dwandhwas as we call them. One who wants only one half and not the other half is unfit for Sadhana. And, a dedicated abhyasi, a devoted abhyasi who wants to be like the Master in every way, must also be willing to suffer everything that the Master has suffered; undergo every torture that the Master has undergone. See, it is a very facile explanation to say that it is all maya, it is a drama that He is playing for us. I say 'Nonsense'. Every second, every multisecond of the Master's life was filled with Reality. His sufferings were Real, His joys were Real, His achievements were Real. How can there be unreality in Reality ? Has He come to fool us and to deceive us ?

So, when we want to pretend that we have pain without having pain, we are negating the value of His existence — of His teaching. On the contrary, our prayer should be : "Babuji, if you want to give me pain give it to me in a concentrated dose." I remember once some western abhyasis had come to Master and were complaining to Him of their problems, miseries, sorrows

— so many problems. Master says, "You will excuse me if I say one thing. In India we have had saints who have prayed 'Let the pain and misery and the sorrow of the whole universe come to me.' Now you please compare yourself with such saints." See, we pride ourselves in coming from a great nation — from a great land hoary with tradition, filled with mystics. Throughout the history, there have been avatars and saints who have been born only on this Bhumi of ours — Bharat Varsha. And yet we are the children of such a wonderful, noble, highly spiritual heritage, sons of rishis ! You ask any fool on the street, "What is your Gotra ?" "Viswamitra Gotra, Kasyapa Gotra, Vasishta Gotra" and then, we are like this chuchunder (new born mouse which cannot see) which goes, trying to avoid, trying to evade; and all the time we are talking from platforms, "Master wants lions but not sheep." Everyone who speaks, imagines that he is the lion, all the rest are sheep ! This is the tragedy of Sahaj Marg that there is no introspection, there is no self-examination.

The second tragedy of Sahaj Marg is that people who know — people who have achieved — they are unable to speak about it, because it will not bear expression, it cannot be told about, it cannot be talked about. It is not that there is anything secret. There are no words to express it. Those that have but book-learning are able to talk glibly about all these things and mislead us more and more : "Everything is simple; Everything is nice; Babuji is here; Babuji is there; Babuji is spread out throughout the Universe." I would like to know how many of us have seen Him in our hearts ! I would like to know if even one of us has seen Him spread out throughout the Universe. I would like to know how many of us have known Him, when He was materially present before us in a living,

pulsating, suffering body. Which of us have known Him? Which of us have known His inside ? Which of us knew what He was suffering from ? He was ever smiling ! He was a Kalyana Purusha ! Have you ever seen Him weeping ? Have you ever seen Him in pain ? And those who have had the opportunity (to see Him in pain) come out and say, "No, no sir, this is all maya (illusion). You know, it is a drama. How can the Divine suffer ? How can the Divine have pain ?" Yes, but then, why the needles and the pins ? And the second, very facile, and very acceptable and very nice explanation is that, "He has taken our samskaras, and therefore He is suffering." I say it is a shame that we should think like this; that we can go on misbehaving, go on with our corrupt attitudes and thoughts and actions, and leave that poor old man of 83 to suffer for us. Do you think it is right ? Do you think it is Love ? Any mere mother is able to suffer for her child : any mere wife is able to suffer for her husband. Please forgive me if I say 'mere' because the women are supposed to be the weaker sex ! It is a misconception. They are the stronger sex. They are able to suffer for the child. They are able to suffer for the husband. They suffer every moment of their lives, — the poor women of India. And, we the lions of Sahaj Marg, the men, the preceptors, shame I say on us, that we are able to accept even intellectually the idea that He is suffering for us ! If I have contributed to one moment of His suffering, I don't deserve to exist; not now. I should not have existed in the past, I don't deserve a future existence. Forgive me, I am speaking with a little force. But Sahaj Marg has been made too simple, for too long, by too many people, all arising out of the misconception that we have very little to do and that He has to do everything for us. It is an utter misconception to think that I can get anything for nothing. Sahaj Marg is

simple — as I told you — when we begin, and when we achieve mastery. In between it is full of frustrations, of loss, of misery, of problems, and loose talk of brotherhood. In this brotherhood there are many problems, you see. We expect the Ultimate brotherhood to come at one stroke; that there shall be peace and plenty on earth, there will be Rama-Rajya, there shall be no hatred, that there shall be no 'abipraya-bedas' (differences of opinion). Is it possible ? What does brotherhood mean ? See, this is the simplest idea of Sahaj Marg that we are all men and women, and we are brothers and sisters. What is brotherhood ? What is sisterhood ? How are we going to become one ? I say that our differences are precisely what highlights our brotherhood ! You see, when two people can have differences of opinion, differences of outlook, differences of goal (perhaps !) and still remain together, is it not a sign of brotherhood ? I am sure that everyone of you here has something in which you differ from me; yet we are together. Why is this togetherness coming about ? Because we love and adore Him who is common to all of us. We are not bound by individual love of each other. We are bound because we love Him, from whom we are all suspended like puppets on a string ! And that is the beauty of Master's message : "Love Him who loves all." If you ever try to love each other, is it ever possible in a world (I don't know) with about four billion population ? Can we love three people in this world with proper Love ? Can we love one ? I have been asking myself "Which husband loves his wife with That Love ? Which wife loves her husband with That Love ?" And we talk glibly of brotherhood where there shall be no differences of opinion, there shall be no frustration, it should all be Rama-Rajya. It is impossible. This brotherhood can come only when you love the

Master so much that everybody you see appears as the Master, and therefore there can be no loss of virtue, no loss of anything, everybody is perfect in themselves; not because they are perfect, but because your eyes see nothing but the perfection.

When a brother was reading from the prepared speech there was a reference to brotherhood. The idea came to me that we admire some of these superbly beautiful girls who have a beauty spot here on the cheek. It is the beauty spot which heightens the beauty. Without that they will be just plain painted dummies ! Similarly it is our diversity — diversity of culture, language, colour, opinions, — this is what binds us together. If we should all think alike, feel alike, talk alike, walk alike, what are we trying — is it a society of robots that we are trying to build ? Kindly try to understand what brotherhood really means, and how it can be achieved only by loving Him who loves all. There is no other way. It is impossible for us to go around loving; I am sure here itself, the abhyasis cannot love each other in that perfect way. Because it is a lifetime's task to love one person; and if that one person happens to be Master, you have achieved what you have to do. You know that puranic story about Siva, who said : "Who goes round the world three times first will get"; and this poor elephant god had the wit to walk around his father and mother and get it. Master : if I adore Him; if I obey Him; if I am faithful to Him; I have achieved the Goal in every respect that Master wants us to achieve. I have achieved brotherhood; I have achieved mastery; I have achieved, most of all, His Love. So these are the things.

Let us deliberate, let us think, let us not be satisfied with what we hear from platforms. Let us read the books of the Master. There is nothing that which our speakers can tell which is not in the books. Because, in Sahaj Marg,

the creation of the philosophy, of the theory, has been perfected by the Master. Does it mean that it is an end in itself ? No ! What does it mean ? That means anything worth saying has been said by the Master. We expand it, like the great Karikas of the past, (you see somebody wrote an Upanishad in twelve sutras, and one man wrote six hundred pages of Karikas on it !) — obliterating all the original meaning and sense of the original. Let us stick to the original.

You see, Master was always concerned that the pristine purity of the practice and the philosophy of our system should be maintained for eternity. It is not for today or tomorrow. And how are we going to do it, if in the very first generation of abhyasis, we start distorting it, moulding it to our own intellectual fancies, predilections ? Is it possible to preserve it ? My advice to you brothers and sisters is, "read the literature of the Master again and again; understand it. It is unnecessary to ask questions." Master has given us the hint, the practice : "question your heart, the heart will reveal." "Whom should I love ?" "Ask your hearts." You know it is a tragedy of Master's life and of His passing away, that I am flooded with letters : "Sir, who is the Master ? On whom should we meditate ?" People who have not been able to achieve meditation on the form of the Master in His lifetime, are asking now after His form has become invisible. You see already the allegiance is being transferred, in the process of transfer. People are in a quandary. Why ? Because it is a selfish approach to the Master. "How will I get ?" is their question, not "What should I do ?" On whom should I meditate ? "Meditate on your Master." Who ? "Your Master, with whom you have been associated all your sadhana years." You see, this is not a society, where we have two marriages and three marriages, least of all in

spirituality ! We have only one marriage — The Master is eternal. Saints know no death .... With the result that there is chaos, there is confusion, and there is this unnecessary talk about this and that, so much of political nonsense. He whose heart is straight oriented towards the Master will have no questions about the past, the present, or the future. Only advice I have to offer you is : "Please do your sadhana without fail." The abhyasi is not supposed to judge his own progress. I know, because many people have asked Master, "What is your condition ?" and Master said : "Only Lalaji knows." If the Master could not know His condition, I am sure we are not going to know our condition. Let us leave it to our betters, our preceptors, to decide what is our condition, whether we are progressing or not. The second biggest (I should say) breach of faith, lack of faith, is to question the idea of progress : "Am I progressing ?" It is a question, "Is Master worthy of being called a Master or not ?" How on earth can He be a Master and you not progress ? Every time an abhyasi asks, "Sir, am I progressing ?" he is exhibiting his lack of Faith in the Master.

You see, take a train. Trains may stop at stations, trains may stop at signals, trains may stop for the engine to take water. We don't know about all these — why is the train stopping ? Will I reach the destination ? You have got into the train; leave it to the administration to take you to the destination. Secondly, if you are concerned only with your progress, it means you have no love for the Master; you are still wedded to your self — my progress, my evolution, my Realisation, my spiritualisation. He who loves the Master does not think of progress. So why worry about progress, why worry about this, that and the other, bring semantics into it, big philosophical questions: "Sir, can I go to the Master in the morning and

temple in the evening ?" See, this sort of question means that there is still a desire in your mind, there is still a bifurcation in your mind between two ideals. If I go to the Master and ask, "Babuji, is it permitted to drink in Sahaj Marg ?" it only means I have still a desire for drinking. If I go to Him and say, "Babuji, can I eat meat ?", it only indicates that there is still a desire for meat-eating. No questions come except based on desire. If desires are lost, questions are lost.

So I would suggest that if you want to see an abhyasi who has developed, look for a silent one and you will find him.

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THE PURPOSE OF EXISTENCE

Most human beings do not know their Goal. Even educated ones, even sophisticated ones, they do not know. I have been wondering why this should be so. When we compare the animal kingdom with the human kingdom — the animal life, bird life, the insect life, they come with some sort of a pre-programmed existence — to use computer terminology, they are pre-programmed. They do not have a choice. They come with a programmed existence which they meticulously follow, by means of what we call "Instinct"; when we relate it to what our Master said about human beings living as animals, it is because when we come here, we are also to some extent (why to some extent, to a very large extent) pre-programmed by our samskaras. It is one of my convictions that no human being has any freedom — of choice, of action, — until and unless he is able to eradicate, to erase, the programming which his samskaras have imposed upon him. This is precisely the need to seek an external guide, an external superior force, a yogic force which can do that very vital job for us, of erasing the programme, and substituting another programme for us — which starts with the idea of a Goal towards which we aspire. So when people ask, particularly in the West, "Master, can I not do this by myself? Am I not capable? I am a Ph.D., I am a doctor, I am an engineer, or what have you", it is very difficult to convince them in today's world of "do-it-yourself" activity, here is one line of pursuit, — the yogic pursuit, — which you cannot do without

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Talk at Raichur celebration on 9th October 1983 evening.

external assistance, for this very vital reason that you have no ability or power to change your programming by yourself.

People who are handling tape recorders know that it cannot erase by itself, you have to erase it; or by recording something superimposing on it, the old one is removed, the new one is imposed. This is the first function of a spiritually enlightened person to open our eyes to our Goal by imposing — it is not an imposition of will, it is an imposition of knowledge or Jnana — and say, "My dear friend, you are suffering from this. This is your samskara. As long as your samaskaras exist, you have no choice. When you have no choice your mind will not work in the proper way. When it does not work in the proper way, what idea can you have of your Goal ? And when you have no Goal, towards what are you going to live, to exist for ?" This is a very vital point which a brother has rightly stressed.

In the next important idea of the necessity to read Master's books, I will tell you from my own experience. When I first came into the Mission, and I was given a copy of 'Reality at Dawn', I read it through in about 35 or 40 minutes, and I literally threw it away saying : "What is there in this, that we have not known before ? There is nothing new." One year later, having nothing else to read, I read 'Reality at Dawn', and I was surprised to find a wealth of meaning ! Now, every time I re-read it, a new meaning comes up. It is a theory of mine that such books which we call eternal books (written by the greatest personalities of this world — in themselves whether they contain any knowledge or not, is not the question —) seem to reflect our growth, our development, very much like a mirror, which (remaining what it is) shows very much the change in my stature, in my face, in my

physiognomy. As I change, the mirror reflects. So the books are very vital, because as our understanding of the contents of the book changes, it seems to give me an idea of my own growth. They are spiritual mirrors. We turn to the mirror every morning for shaving, but unfortunately we do not turn to these Divine spiritual mirrors for our spiritual enlightenment, which we should do.

"Anything new in Sahaj Marg ?" Well, if you read our ancient literature, you find that every saint had held out the same Goal — Divinisation; you must be like God, you must aspire to be God. But one interesting and important point is that the very idea of Divinity seems to evolve into something new as we develop. You know, if you study the history of Religion, you start with things like worship of the crudest sort — worship of animals, worship of birds, worship of trees, then going into worship of the forces of Nature which produced these things — worship of the rain, worship of the wind, worship of the sun; then evolving into the idea of the trinity — the triumvirate, the Creator, the Destroyer and the Preserver; the coming into monistic worship of there being only One who manifests as the three. Is it God who has changed ? It is we who have changed. And as we develop, our idea of the Ultimate develops. That is why our Master has beautifully put a title for His book : "Towards Infinity"; because the Goal seems to recede as we approach. The Goal seems to show itself in a different way as we approach : "Subtler and subtler, yet subtler." Master can do nothing except explain in His "Towards Infinity", when you start from point one and go to the thirteenth, He says, "this condition is yet subtler than the previous one." Unless we experience, we are not able to know what it is. It cannot be explained. But, is it the sins of the past that they were not able to do it ? It only reflects the level of development of

the human mind at that stage, which could posit before it only the level of Divinity up to which it was capable of perceiving. Today the human being has changed in its ability to conceive of the Godhead itself in a different way. There comes the Master who says "Well, go beyond !" And then, He gives the brilliant, very ununderstandable, and very confusing idea of "Nothingness". Now, this is something we have all to ponder over.

Then, coming to Transmission, we have had the explanations by many, what Transmission really does ? Master said, "It is the utilisation of the Divine energy for the transformation of Man." But how does it work ? Because, as Master Himself has said, there are cases where even the Transmission is reflected back from the man who comes to take the Transmission. It is as if it cannot penetrate. So, the important thing even prior to receiving the Transmission seems to be the need to accept the Master. One who does not accept the Master does not seem capable of receiving the very Transmission which is designed to transform him. And when does this acceptance of the Master begin ? When we see Him, when we move with Him, when we are associated with Him, we grow to love Him, to cherish Him, to adore Him, and the desire comes, to be like Him. "In every aspect of His existence, I want to be like Him" — this sort of attitude. There seems to be a progressively increasing ability in the Transmission of the Master to transform us as we go further and further ahead on our spiritual path. In the beginning, it is very difficult; in later stages very easy; at the final stages, as Master said, it is like taking something from here and putting it there; it is so easy, ridiculously easy. So the creation of craving by setting an example (to the man who comes to the preceptor) — it is not only the Master's duty to set an example — it is the duty of every

preceptor; I would extend it and say it is the duty of every abhyasi of the Mission to create an example, by his actions, by his thoughts, by his deeds, by the way he behaves in society, in his house. People should look at him and say "What is it that you are, that you have become like this ? What are you doing ?" So, the first need of all of us who are abhyasis of the Mission, is to become living examples of the Master's teachings, even before this transformation can take place; by acquiring this craving; by creating in ourselves this craving to be like Him; because, that is the first step in becoming like Him.

There was some reference to restlessness. I remember Master's usual way of defining "Restlessness" very humorous, very penetrating, profound in its meaning. He said "Restlessness se less-ness nikal do, tho rest hai" (Remove 'less-ness' from "restlessness", and what remains is 'rest')! How is it applicable in my practical life ? We are always feeling "Lessness" : I don't have enough of this, I don't have enough of that; I don't know enough, I have not enough wealth." Who is it that feels ? It is "I" ! That means, all of us. When we feel lacking we become restless. Now, how to overcome this feeling of lack ? Of course there are the traditional ways, saying, "Be content with what you have, take it as God's gift." Theek hai. That is all O.K. But when we start getting this Transmission, which removes our samskaras first, and puts the power of the Almighty in us through the Master's Grace, in some mysterious intangible manner it progressively removes this "Lessness" from us, and brings us to a peace, to a state of balance. It is not so much a state of peace as a state of balance; because restlessness is really an imbalanced state. So this thought I wanted to share with you.

Then talking of "Tat Twam Asi", we have been to some extent guilty like the other great religions of the

world. "Tat Twam Asi" ("That thou Art") — the finger pointing somewhere else ! It is said there are two approaches : one is where we see God externally somewhere in heaven (which some of the major religions of the world do). "God is somewhere in heaven and there is a journey towards Him"; which they interpret very wrongly as a physical journey, over time and space. To some extent this "Tat Twam Asi" — it is called one of the mahavakyas, — seems to be guilty of the very same thought. I would rather say "This you are". You are THIS and, when have I a right to say this ? When, That which was talked of by the Master as Divinity, has been permitted to enshrine and enthrone itself in our hearts; and instead of looking outwards, we look in and say "He is here" because what is inside me, I am. If I have money in my pocket, I am a rich man. If I have knowledge in my head, I am an educated man, a wise man. If I have God in my heart, I am a Divine person.

I recently read somewhere, I think it is a quotation from the famous American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson, where he says : "That which remains, when everything that we have learnt has been lost, is education." I am not offering this as a mere definition of education. It has a profundity of meaning associated with Master's own teachings : "Destroy your creation and His Creation comes into existence." The first thing we learn when we come into Sahaj Marg, much to our sorrow, much to our regret, is this; (very often we put our hand on our head, and say, "Is this what I bargained for, when I came into this samstha ?"). We are told to unlearn everything that we have learnt; because that is also part of our samskara — the ego associated with knowledge; the wrong conceptions arising out of wrong knowledge; misinterpretation of knowledge, all this has to be lost; and

when all this is lost, tne essence remains, which (Master very kindly says) is your true education. Therefore the immense stress laid by the Master to dissolve our creation, to destroy our creation, so that His Creation can come into effect.

About Patanjali, a brother told us, between him and today some 3000 years have elapsed, and yet this very tenacious clinging to this Ashtanga Yoga, which few people understood and few people follow. This is an indication of human aversion to change : "What has been said by the past – the Masters of the past is true, for ever and ever, true for eternity." If there is a need for Avataras to come again and again, if there is a need for Mahapurushas to come again and again, it only means that there is a tendency in the human being to go backwards, when he is imagining he is going forward; and he has to be pulled every now and then periodically, and shown the right path. Now, there comes this inertia -- this aversion to change — which has to be overcome. This we find in our traditional panthathis of worship, puja kramas, temple going, pithru karmas, all these associated facts — whether it is Hindu, Christian or Muslim, it is immaterial -- because the same fixity, the same solidness is there. In fact the English word is 'petrifaction' — that which has become stone-like. So systems tend to petrify because of the misplaced veneration for something which is past, which is old, which is hoary with age. We seem to think or evaluate spiritual systems, very much as we evaluate antique objects — by their age rather than their efficacy.

In the "Ten Commandments", a brother has delightfully told us, how unlike other religious systems we are not told what to do, and what not to do. "Do's and Dont's" do not exist in our system. In fact many

Westerners have asked Master, "Babuji, don't you give us the Ten Commandments which are similar to Christianity, for instance ?" — "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods, Thou shalt worship no God but me." Master said, "I do not distinguish between good samskaras and bad samskaras. Samskara is samskara. As long as there is samskara, you are going to come back here. Bad samskara means a worse life, good samskara means a better life; no samskara means no return." So in His immense wisdom, Babuji has given us a system which (as its primary purpose) rids us of all feelings of guilt. Because, when you are given specific instructions like "thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods" and we do covet, and we are unable not to covet, we are guilt-ridden, adding one more guilt. In fact Master has told us this very very solemnly, I should say. Once I asked Him "Babuji, why don't you give us direct instructions ?" He gave me two reasons : He said, "Lalaji never gave direct instructions; I am following His way." I asked, "What is the second ?" He said, "If I give direct instructions and the abhyasi does not obey, I impose upon him the sin of disobedience of the Master. I do not wish to do it." So we are given "Guidelines", and I accept that it seems almost impossible to follow even one of those Ten Commandments. The first one seems particularly difficult in modern times, that is, "wake up before sunrise and do your sadhana" ! We have fallen into this Western curse of loving our beds too much ! And on Sundays we want to sleep even later than on other days, so that on Sunday satsangh we find half the people missing ! Here precisely comes Babuji's wisdom, and more importantly, Babuji's Grace, Babuji's benignity, His benign love for us – that He only proposes, He does not order ! He places before us something for our acceptance, and says, "If you

want this, do this." There is no implication of sin or virtue, there is no implication of punishment, therefore we do not feel this guilt associated with non-performance of the "Ten Commandments" - though sometimes I feel it is desirable we should do so, at least to goad us to pursue them !

A very important thing in Sahaj Marg is - it goes from inside out — the centrifugal working. You see, it is such a simple thing that most people do not seem to be able to understand. A tree does not grow from outside, it grows from inside. When you put it into the earth, cover it up, it is from inside the life force springs as a sapling, throwing aside the shell that is imprisoning it. This is the natural way. And in the process of growth it sheds its 'avaranas' as we call them in Sanskrit — this is one way of shaking off the (sheaths or) avaranas in us, because when we grow from inside, the avaranas have to fall, like the bark which falls off the tree which is growing. The trunk is expanding, the bark is falling; it acquires another rind, that also goes ... Whereas if you try to impose growth from outside, it affects neither the outside, nor the inside, it can only whitewash (like whitewashing the walls) hiding all the sins and blemishes behind them.

Karma, Gnana, Bhakti — a beautiful example of the unification of the three principles, and in exemplification thereof, that only by doing we can know, only by knowing we can love, only by loving we can achieve or become. Master's oft-quoted statement is: "Everybody comes to see me, but nobody really sees me." It is a tragedy of our historical, spiritual heritage that we are taught more to look with the outside vision - (we are always talking of Anthar Gnana (inner knowledge), Antharyoga (inner yoga) and politically anthar-Rashtriya, things like that which do not mean the same thing) — but as long as we

restrict our perception to the gross perception with our physical eyes and other sensory apparatus at our command, we are never really going to know anything. Now, how do we know here, at all? By doing we can know better — how? Precisely because when we turn our gaze from the outside to the inside in the act of meditation — it is a reversal of the gaze, turning away from the outer to inner — to the chamber of the heart, where we are asked to imagine the presence of the Divine Light (Divya Prakasham). Thus, the ability is nurtured in us to turn away from the external universe to the internal one, which (Master assures us) is incomparably vaster to the mere external, physical universe, however immense it may be. It has no relationship at all! But this act of turning our vision from the outer to the inner — closing our eyes and learning to perceive with closed eyes what is in — gives us the ability to go inside, whatever it be. Such a person is able to see the heart of the individual, when he comes and sits in front of him. Such a person is able to go to the heart of the matter (as we say in the English language) whatever be the subject matter under perusal or under examination or under inspection. This ability (if I may say so) is valid not only for spiritual existence and growth; it is vital even for our material growth; because, how often have we not struggled with problems, with personality problems among individuals, with growth problems in industries, with educational problems with students — because we are not able to intuitively perceive the inner condition of this thing or person or event. I am highlighting the importance of this, because people foolishly imagine that spiritual knowledge — spiritual science, spiritual growth, spiritual ability — is restricted only to the spiritual life. On the contrary only a truly spiritual person can be an effective person, in any walk of life. It is said in the Gita :

"Yogah Karmasu Kausalam." He becomes a perfectionist in every aspect of his approach, whether it is external or internal. Therefore, by following this idea of "Karma leading to Gnana leading to Bhakti", we find that we can have command over two realms of existence, the physical and the spiritual, the material and the spiritual. If for nothing else except success in our material life, this is a very valid point worth remembering. And this also perhaps shows, "Bahunaam Janmanaam Anthe Gnanavaan maam prapadyanthe" — why not ? Why does Krishna say, a Gnanavaan takes so many Janmas to come to 'Me' ? I would suggest it is precisely because those Gnanis restricted their Gnana (wisdom) to the external, and did not penetrate inside.

I have one thought to offer in conclusion. Very often abhyasis mistake the spiritual pursuit, the spiritual Goal, as something for their personal edification, for their personal possession, for their personal aggrandisement, whatever have you, you see. I would say that the more we get, the less we give; because as Master once told me : "God does not waste His time on you (my dear friend) for YOUR purpose. If God is going to take an interest in you, and makes a saint of you or a perfect human being of you, it is for HIS Purpose that He takes you; not for your purpose." I would like to caution abhyasis, because very often we think that a saint becomes a saint for himself; a Gnani becomes a Gnani for himself or herself. No ! One who grows and betrays the Purpose of the Master will lose that growth. One who grows and betrays the Purpose of the Master (in the Master's mercy, if he keeps that growth, what he has attained uptil that moment) he will grow no further. There is always the possibility that Nature can intervene and take away that growth from us. It is very much like a banyan tree, which as it grows, puts down

adventitious roots for its support. The adventitious roots of the banyan tree are not meant for the growth of the root itself ! They are there to form pillars of that which is growing above ! In our case, it is the Master's supreme spiritual reign for the next few thousands of years — or may be even longer (I do not know, I am not competent to say that). Unless and until we contribute to His Purpose, to the fulfilment of His Plans, for which He came, and subscribe to His views and ideas whole-heartedly, and understand that I am practising Sahaj Marg, not to become a saint, not to achieve human perfection, not even for Layavastha which is so touted about as the ultimate purpose of life even by the Master — unless and until we realize this, my dear brothers and sisters, spirituality has no meaning for us.

Thank you for your patient hearing.

3

SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

My Divine Master has bestowed upon us the task of continuing the work of Spiritual Development of mankind. The responsibility for this auspicious work may perhaps be considered to be that of His Representative alone. The work has, however, to be shared by one and all. This is fair and just, because each one of us, in performing the Task allotted to us by my Master, is working upon himself or herself and that too for one's own spiritual growth and development up to the highest level of Divinisation.

What is the reward for this work ? It is not a Crown; one does not work for honour or glory or recognition. My Master worked for results and results alone. This, if one ponders over it for a minute, is what work is really undertaken for. When we work for recognition or glory or other things like that, we miss the real result that work should be blessed with, namely progress and growth.

Growth involves change. Can there ever be progress without change ? Can a baby become an adult without changing ? Can a seed become a tree, and yield fruit, without change ? Change is thus perceived to be an integral part of the growth process. In fact it is change, which brings about the desired result, and what we really work for, is to bring about such change. My Master has stated categorically that there can be no progress without change.

First Message given at Yogashram, Hyderabad on 29th December 1983.

When things cease to change, a stage sets in which can be justifiably called death. Looked at, in this way, death can be said to be a cessation of the process of change. That is, death is the cessation of growth.

Spiritual progress, Spiritual growth, involves change. Progress, after all, is nothing but a change for the better in our condition. The Sadhana is the process created by my Master to bring about continuing change for our Spiritual betterment, from moment to moment. If we ponder over it, we shall see that a resistance to change is a resistance to our own growth and progress. Can we stop change ? Is there any one capable of arresting change ? No ! Change is inevitable. It is a law of Nature that things must change, must evolve. Change is thus seen to be inescapable. My Master has said that the only permanent thing in the Universe is change. We must be grateful for this because if it were not so, progress, all growth, would cease.

When we accept change, we accept the Master's Will. When we accept it totally and unreservedly, with the Faith that it is essential for all progress, the stage of Surrender sets in. Surrender, looked at in this way, is a humble submission to the process of change that my Master 'Initiates' in us, for our growth to the highest levels of spirituality available to mankind.

Resistance to change is caused by fear and prejudice. Prejudice is the resistance to a change in values. We resist the change in others; rather, we refuse to perceive such change. Since our views become fixed, our own progress is adversely affected. My Master has cautioned us that prejudice is one of the most harmful things on the spiritual path. Why is this so ? It is because prejudice is a mental phenomenon. The power of the mind, thought

power, is the highest power, the most potent power, available to man. When we use this power in a negative way to oppose change in others or ourselves, that is, when we yield to prejudice, we are using the power of thought in the wrong way. The greatest alertness is therefore necessary to avoid prejudice.

My Master has made available to us, most graciously and benevolently, the Sahaj Marg Sadhana to bring about Spiritual change in each and every one to help us to attain the Goal. It is our solemn duty to practise it assiduously with faith, and love for all, so that our Goal can be achieved in the shortest possible time, which, as my Master has emphasised, should be within one's own life time.

May His benediction ever be upon Humanity. May His Divine Grace ever flow to one and all through Eternity. May He bless us Eternally with His Divine Presence.

AMEN !

4

CONTINUITY OF A TRADITION

Once I was travelling with my Master Shri Babuji Maharaj. On the way to Delhi from Europe, Master was very preoccupied for about half an hour. Afterwards, when He relaxed a little and became His normal human self, I suggested to Him, in an inquisitive way, that He had been doing some spiritual work. He said, "Yes, I was doing some spiritual work; please study and let me know what I was doing." I smiled foolishly, and said, "How can I see what you are doing ?" He replied, "When our preceptors are given some work, they immediately think they cannot do it ! I insist that you do it." So I tried my best to study what He was doing, and said, "Babuji, I think you were working in the future." Master said, "Very good ! You have done something which few preceptors can do." As I did not do much, and had thought over it only for a few minutes, I asked Him, "How is that ?" He said, "To know whether I am working in the past, present or future is itself a great achievement, you see. You have answered correctly that it is in the future. Tell me now, how far into the future ?" I had to put on the thinking cap again and told Him, "To me it appears that it is very far into the future; it may be many thousands or tens of thousands of years." Sitting next to me, He hugged me and said, "Few people could have assessed my work in this fashion. Shall I tell you what I was doing ?" I said, "Please, Babuji." He said, "You know there will be a Personality who will come at the time of Mahapralaya for the dissolution of the Universe. I had some idle time on

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Talk at the Founder's day celebration at Madras on 1st January 1984.

my hands, and so I laid the foundation for that Personality's work !" I said, "Babuji, according to the calculations of mystics, that is something like 432 million years into the future !" He said, "How does it matter ? 432 million or 43,000 million makes no difference. I was free, the work was there and it was done. Poor fellow ! Whoever has to come at that time should not suffer ! So I laid the foundation for his work."

I have told you this story not to give you the impression that I am very good at reading Master's work or anything like that — that is incidental. The exercise of what little I was able to do gave me the knowledge of Master's true Divinity. We should never confuse Master's temporal existence in His physical frame, in His weak physical body and its unfortunate, unforeseen and sudden end i.e. Master's temporality, with the manifested Divinity or Eternity of the Master. The temporal self was impermanent; His Eternal Self, His Divine Self is eternal.

The concept of a Master, therefore, is not limited to a person or a place in time. If the Master ever existed in the past, He will continue to exist in the future till the end of time. This is the same as what they say about the soul — that which was created will certainly cease to exist, because a created thing means that it has a span of existence which can come to an end. That which was and is, shall ever be — is another concept. Now Masters take their authority, they derive their power, they exist solely for and on behalf of the Divine, for the Divine, by the Divine. Divinity is a concept which, one cannot say, began with time and ends with Mahapralaya. The Divine is *not* going to have a brief span of existence — even though that briefness may last the lives of ten thousand Brahmas, which is yet brief.

In the place of Eternity, the life of ten thousand Brahmas is like a mere second for us. So, the one who derives His authority, who draws His power, who gets His wisdom, who is allotted His work and who emerges from the Divine cannot cease to exist at any moment in Time or Space.

This small episode I related to you was, to me, a first-hand proof of Master's Divinity and, therefore, His Eternity. So even to think whether the Master is existing today or tomorrow is foolish. It is like saying whether Lalaji Maharaj has ceased to exist or not. Unfortunately, nobody likes to project backwards and think of Lalaji Maharaj. People ask, "Was Lalaji the true Master or was Master the true Master? Who was the Special Personality — Lalaji or Babuji ?" I am not prepared to answer that question, because it is a foolish question. If my grandfather was not alive, my father would not have been born, and if my father was not born, married and lived a family life, I would not be here ! So it is a continuing stream of consciousness which Master has labelled the Divine Consciousness. It seeks for itself a conduit through which it can flow. A conduit serves only to permit the channelisation of the Divine Energy, the Divine resourcefulness, the Divine powers, to flow through itself. The Divine itself becomes a conduit and works as a conduit for its own work. It is as if a man should suddenly become a pipe, his energy flow through that pipe and at the end of the pipe, become himself again — the form changes.

I am reminded of a beautiful story in "The Bhagawatam". Jhambavan, a devotee of Rama, meets Lord Krishna but refuses to accept Him (as the Master). Krishna tries to persuade him saying, "No doubt you are a

Rama-bhakta (devotee of Rama) but brother, I am the same !"

Jhambavan persists, "You ? How can you be Rama, that famous Lord, my Lord, my Master whom I adored and whom I served ? You are a 'ducha' (crook) etc." He argues against Krishna in so many ways. Then Krishna suddenly reveals Himself in the form of Rama, and Jhambavan falls and worships at His feet ! That may have been necessary to convert Jhambavan to His way of thinking.

I remember a stage when one abhyasi went to Master and said, "Babuji, you know 'so and so' transformed 'such and such' a person. For instance, Krishna revealed to Arjuna the Viswaroopa Darsana (the vision of His Universal Form). Can you do it for me ?"

Master very humbly said, "You may be Arjuna, but I am not Krishna."

So it is the prerogative and privilege of the Master as to when, why and where He should reveal Himself, if at all. It is very difficult to decide. As Master has often said, "All these difficulties crop up because we use our rational mind instead of our heart."

Yesterday, you might have seen on the television a story of the cinema wherein a father told his little daughter that her mother died because he threw her out of the house. Later the child was unwilling to accept the mother when she came back, saying "No, no ! My mother is dead. You cannot be my mother." Now, how can the poor mother change or transform herself and prove to the child that she is the mother ? But when an accident or crisis arrives, the child comes weeping, running to the mother and recognises its mother. Likewise, often it is the unfortunate fact of human existence that we seem to need

crises to guide us in the right direction, just as the bull is pricked with a spur to goad it on, in the right direction.

People ask, "Can he be what he claims to be ?" This is a good question because if the Master's Representative should claim anything for himself, he does not deserve to be there ! They ask the next question, "Can he be what the Master says he is ?" It is the height of impertinence to ask this question, not because it affects me personally but because our philosophy of Sahaj Marg teaches us to unquestioningly obey the Master, once you have accepted Him. But you have the privilege of not accepting Him also, as you see, nobody compels us to accept the Master. We came voluntarily, stayed voluntarily and we grew to love Him. It is therefore, incumbent upon the continuation of our love for the Master that what the Master says continues to exist in our hearts. It is only our idea that we are temporal, physically limited, spatially limited and restricted persons that brings about these questions and doubts. Forgive me for saying that any controversy on the subject of His Representative is a direct attack on the Master's supremacy, His Divinity and His Ultimacy.

Change always comes, as somebody rightly said. In Lalaji's time, Lalaji passed away and there were several groups. Some created new Sansthas (spiritual organisations), of which one is still flourishing today. In Fatehgarh itself there is one organisation claiming a membership of lakhs. We, who claim to be the true branch of Spirituality under Shri Ramchandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur, have hardly touched one tenth of a lakh in membership. Now what is it that attracted people there in such large numbers, where they only have a picture of Lalaji Maharaj, some bhajans and talks ? You have all seen so-and-so here who belongs to that organisation. He

knew nothing about Transmission, and did not offer to give us a sitting. He came like a visitor, spoke like a visitor and went away like a visitor and he was a direct associate of Lalaji whom he had contact with for eight long years ! All that he could say was a bit of a charitable speech when he said, "I am glad Ram Chandra has done so much in spreading this Mission abroad. We are all doing Lalaji's work together." He was able to take from Shri Ram Chandra Mission, a part of its achievement and glorify himself. But a hundred thousand people are there in that organisation, or perhaps more. So what attracts people or what does not ? As one of our brothers spoke, the wise are few. But it is not a reason to be unhappy about, because in Sahaj Marg even wisdom is not required ! Master has never said that He wanted wise abhyasis. He has said, "I do not need wisdom." Intellect is only a bar. What is wisdom ? It is a tool for evaluation, synthesising mentally and taking decisions. If any abhyasi claims that he has surrendered to Master, he does not need wisdom, as it is the Master who is guiding him. Why should I have wisdom ? Why should I have power ? Why should I have strength and courage ? I do not need any of these things. All these attributes — whether they be 'shodasha lakshanas' (sixteen attributes) or 'ashta eishwaryas' (eight types of wealth) or whatever they may be — belong still to the humanly divinised plane where God is still thought of as an extraordinary human being.

But one who has surrendered, and claims to be a mere tool in the hands of the Master, needs nothing — because a tool by itself has nothing. When you take up a hammer it does not hammer by itself ! It is used by the hand of the Master who uses it as a hammer. If it is a knife, by itself it can do nothing ! A knife lying in the drawer is useless — somebody has to take it and use it.

So the beauty of the Sahaj Marg system — I should say the absolute and utter beauty and simplicity — is that an abhyasi is not required to have any thing at all ! That is, if an abhyasi can start with no attributes at all, I think he can be transformed by the Master the moment he came into the sight of Master — because he is jumping from one state of nothingness in to the other state of Nothingness; from a finite state of nothingness to the infinite state of Nothingness; from a temporally limited state of nothingness to an infinitely unlimited, exuberant state of Nothingness.

I would, therefore, like to caution our brothers and sisters to be ever alert against the dictates of their wisdom. Those who have read 'My Master' know that I made that mistake myself when I went to see the Master for the first time. He was lying there like a baby curled up in bed, and I literally put my hand on my head thinking, "Is it for this that I had undertaken such a long journey ?" It may be justified that it should happen to every one of us in the beginning, but if it should stay with us till the end, it will be a tragedy. These things happen only because we use our mind, our intellect, our eyes, ears and nose far too much ! We try to smell out the Representative ! His Representative is not a piece of trash that can be smelt a mile away. He is not something unique in that your eyes can perceive what he is. He is not going to say something, which no one has ever said before, that with our ears we can conclude that he is the true Representative of the Master. His form and figure are nothing new — it is a human form and figure — that you can touch him or face him and say, "This is the Master — Master's Representative !" So how can one judge ? There is unfortunately no way. It is, therefore, unfortunate and a little contemptuous on the part of the Master to have left a

document -- contemptuous of us because Lalaji left no such document in the utter confidence that His Representative would be accepted at His own words. Master (Babuji) had to think of leaving a document behind, because He knew in His own wisdom, that His tribe is not going to accept him so easily. I do not know what the next generation of abhyasis are going to be - we may have to carve a document on stone pillars that so-and-so is the next Representative ! Such a time should not come. It is not a laughing matter and you know I have a way of looking at things differently. To me it is a little shameful that Master thought so little of us, so poorly of us, that He had so little confidence in our trust and faith in Him, that He had to put down in writing which Lalaji left in the atmosphere.

So, brothers and sisters, it is my earnest hope that we will throw away all these mundane, merely human, attributes, whatever they may signify. To be intelligent is thought of as a great thing — people admire intelligence. We fall a prey to that admiration and, therefore, we try to become more intelligent. People admire power and so we seek more power. Unfortunately, people cannot see spirituality, so nobody admires us for our spirituality and, therefore, we fall — because we only respond to admiration, adulation and praise. We seek that in ourselves, for which we are admired by others ! Any fool can see your wealth, your strength and your intellect, but there are few today who can recognise a spiritual man if he is walking on the road. This is the greatest danger to us because nobody admires us for our inner growth, for our inner benediction that Master is showering upon us. We may think or even feel that we are less than others and, therefore, try to go on the other path of power, money, fame and so many other things, and forget that which is

'inside' — and one day it will disappear. This is the greatest danger.

I should, therefore, caution you all today to forget you are human beings and imagine that you are mere instruments in the hands of the Master — to be wielded by Him at His purpose. When He wants a Chisel, He takes a Chisel; when He wants a Saw, He takes a Saw; when he wants a Mallet, He takes a Mallet. It is not the knife's fault that it is sharp or the Saw's fault that it has teeth. It is for the Master to use the instrument which He feels appropriate to the time.

We have all been ranting from platforms that it is the need of the time, and Lalaji was an epitome of Nature. I say that it is arrogant pride to attribute it to Lalaji and deny it to the Master. If Lalaji could fashion His own instrument in His own time saying it is the need of time and Nature, surely you do not intend to say that Babuji was something less and, therefore, could not fashion His own instrument as He chose. It may not meet with our approval. If the Master wants a cutting instrument, who are we to deny Him that ? If He wants fire to burn, who are we to deny Him fire ? If He wants water to wet us with, who are we to deny Him water ? It is our arrogance, our pride, our lack of humility, our anger and, mostly, our lack of faith in the Master which make us demand the type of person we wish rather than the type of instrument He wishes to leave for us. To my mind, this, more than anything else, is the tragedy of the present situation. I earnestly pray to the Master to release us from the bondage of the senses, of the intellect, of our efforts to judge. We cannot see a tiny seed grow, and here we are trying to judge a man, a Personality, the Divine itself who is laying the foundation for Mahapralaya. We measure our life by years (which may stretch up to ninety at the

most) which is not even equivalent to a hair's breadth in Eternity and we are playing with His wish, His will. We are also saying from platforms that Master has said that Sahaj Marg will continue for several thousands of years, forgetting that it is in our hands to see whether it will continue at all or not. It is like a family where if the first child dies, the family may very well stop there. Only the parents know the tragedy. Therefore, they hurry up to make a second child, and then pray intensely that the second child be spared.

Continuity is a function of every instant of time. There is nothing that begins which can go on for ever except an inanimate body moving in the Universe obeying the laws of Newton. Inanimate bodies are spared the function of human arrogance, human ignorance and human pride. Once set in motion, they go on for ever. They are, by and large, more mercifully treated by the Almighty. They are not subject to our constraints and restraints of ignorance and foolishness. It is by far better to be a lump of rock out there in the Universe, going on for ever towards the source. It may take millions of years, no matter we have taken millions of years, if the theory of evolution is to be believed. We have already taken something like five thousand million years (which is the age of the earth) but we are still where we are ! How are we any better than a lump of stone flying in space, unimpeded by anything under the touch of the Divine hand ? And here, every second of our existence in spirituality is fraught with dangers and stumbling blocks. We must remember that nothing continues unless we allow it to continue. The Divine Will may work by finding another channel for its purpose – that is beyond the scope of our discussion here. What the Divine can do and cannot do, we are hardly in a position to judge. Whether WE will be in the

scheme of things, whether WE will be part and parcel of the Divine plan that He has made is very much in OUR hands. Please remember this.

5

THE TASK AHEAD

We are all gathered here today to celebrate the Auspicious and Holy Birth Day of our Beloved Master, Samarth Guru Mahatma Shri Ram Chandraji Maharaj, Founder President of Shri Ram Chandra Mission, Shahjahanpur, to whom we all belong, body and soul. The Mission is the spiritual organisation which He has created with His loving hands to shelter and succour us. His Divine teachings, and the efficacious, practical system of Sadhana, the system of SAHAJ MARG, perfected by our Divine Master, is there for our spiritual benefit, to enable us to reach the spiritual goal of human perfection, and Divinisation to the highest level ever open to humanity. It is His sublime Grace and Divine love that has made available to us such an easy method of practice which can lead us to that goal safely and speedily. It becomes our bounden duty to practise it assiduously, with one-pointed devotion, with our hearts full of "Love for Him who loves all", with unswerving faith, to enable Him, our Beloved Master, to lead us up to Himself !

We are all co-travellers on this Divine journey to the Ultimate. Our journey will be made all the easier for us if we undertake it, in a spirit of total co-operation and mutual brotherhood, in a spirit of service to all our brothers and sisters, together with a surrendering willingness and preparedness to make any, and every, sacrifice that may become necessary to reach our destination. The Master's assurance of the ready and

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Message given on the occasion of Shri Ram Chandraji's Birth Anniversary celebration at Madras on 30th April 1984.

permanent availability of His Divine help and guidance is there to encourage us on the way to the destination.

The special Personality, our Great and Benevolent Master, graciously descended to this misery-filled and strife-torn world only to help suffering humanity. He has perfected the system of Sadhana, and removed all the thorns, impediments and lurking dangers that beset earlier generations of spiritual aspirants. His Holy Lotus feet have converted a jungle path into a broad, smooth and direct highway to the Ultimate, for us to walk upon on our spiritual Yatra – our journey – to the Goal !

Was the Goal ever so easily achievable ? Was such Divine assistance and guidance ever available to human beings burdened with the cares and responsibilities of a human existence ? It is our solemn duty to ponder over this deeply, and to keep the highway to the Lord, our Benevolent Master, in good repair, so that it may remain open to the coming generations of humanity that must, and shall, follow His Divine way in ever increasing numbers in the future. His Divine dream was to make this world itself into a "Way to the Ultimate", and our part in it, however humble it may be, has to be played with a sense of dedication to this duty that our participation in this Yatra itself lays upon us.

The task shall be fulfilled because it is HIS WILL. Our part in it is no doubt there, for us to play. But when ? Only when we do not allow ourselves to be diverted by the glamour of this earthly existence, and by the selfish loves and hates that dominate it, keeping our eyes fixed upon Him and Him alone, the Goal of our Yatra, who is the Divine vessel of our love, and the supreme Guide to Himself.

Whatever will be, will be ! That is absolutely certain ! Alongside with this is the inevitability of CHANGE ! Master has stated that the only permanent thing in the universe is change. This inevitability of change is the foundation for all our hopes and aspirations. At the lowest level our hopes are for a betterment in the human condition; at the highest level it is an aspiration for spiritual evolution to the Highest ! Whatever our hopes may be for, hope is founded upon the possibility of change. The truth of this will appear if we but ponder over it for a second. Upon what do we base our hopes ? How does hope exist at all ? Hope exists in our hearts only because we naturally and intuitively perceive the inevitability of change, which gives us the understanding that under no circumstances can the present continue as it is. It must change into something else !

It is this aspiration for change that is reflected in our hearts as a hope for the future. Without change, therefore, there can be no future. It is this perception of the process of change, and its promise for the future, which makes us strive to bring about change in ourselves, in our condition of existence. We strive to become something which we are not ! Change alone holds out the possibility of progress. It is change that offers us the promise of growth, and the certainty of becoming what our Divine Master wishes us to become. Viewed in this way, change is the process of becoming ! The Divine Personality, our Benevolent Master, has come down only for effecting such change, to enable us to become what He wants us to become. Our Beloved Master is thus seen to be a Divine agent of change ! Can we oppose change ? Do we have the power to prevent change ? If we oppose change, we are really opposing His Will ! Our duty clearly lies in speeding up the process of change by dedicated Sadhana, so that our

journey to the destination, our Original Home, is accelerated.

What is dedication ? Dedication is the state in which our commitment to an ideal becomes total. In the beginning a sense of commitment is lacking. As we progress along the path, the sense of involvement increases and becomes a commitment to the effort, to the fulfilment of the purpose. We begin to remember the purpose of this existence. We begin to remember our Original Home. We begin to remember Him more and more, and as our commitment increases, or rather as it deepens, the remembrance becomes more and more frequent, until it culminates in what our Divine Master has called CONSTANT REMEMBRANCE. It is thus seen that dedication is reflected in constant remembrance. The greater the degree of remembrance, the greater the degree of dedication it reveals ! What do we work for ? We work for those things that we love. We work for our children. Why do we work for them ? Because we love them ! Why do we love them ? Because they are ours ! So we find that we love everything that we feel to be ours. We work for those whom we love. Dedication increases because our remembrance of those whom we love keeps our nose to the grinding wheel, as the saying goes ! The greater the dedication, the greater the effort. The greater the effort, the greater the success. I may say that constant remembrance becomes possible only when we take the Master as our very own, without any reservation, and love Him with all our heart and soul. The way then becomes smooth and easy, and the Goal is reached in the shortest possible time.

Every traveller has a responsibility to see that the way is secure; that it is maintained in good repair; that our brotherly love and affection is freely available to all those

who are accompanying us; and that our services are unreservedly offered to all those who may need it, without considerations of any nature such as caste, creed, colour etc. – such as have unfortunately served to divide humanity in the past coming in the way. All our differences must be firmly set aside. "Unity in Diversity" is the law of nature ! The thread which unifies us all, the love for Him which binds us together in our aspiration, in our endeavour, must be strengthened. The teachings of our Great Master must not merely be followed by us for our own personal benefit, but must be preserved intact, in their pristine purity and holiness, for posterity. It is our sacred inheritance, to be used, and then passed on to those others who shall come after us in innumerable numbers.

Our Master has stated that His teachings will serve the spiritual needs of humanity for thousands and thousands of years to come ! The spiritual heritage entrusted to us is therefore a sacred trust, to be held and passed on from generation to generation of spiritual aspirants all over the world, in its pure and unalloyed form. What we have inherited from our Master is therefore this sacred trusteeship of His method, His teachings, casting upon us a solemn duty which each and every one of us must strive to fulfil. It may not be an exaggeration to state that the spiritual future of humanity, its very destiny, lies in the frail hands of the present generation of our Master's devotees ! It is an awesome responsibility. We have to ponder over the ways and means of fulfilling this task, and justifying the faith that He has so lovingly reposed in us. We must pray to Him to grant us the wisdom and the strength necessary to fulfil this great and noble task that lies ahead of us.

The trust that our Beloved Master reposed in us must not be betrayed. The love that He has so freely showered

upon us must be offered at His Lotus Feet, multiplied a million fold. The foundation that He has laid must be built upon. The work that He has done must bear fruit, over and over again, season after season. The way that He has trodden, and made smooth and perfect for humanity to tread upon, must be trodden by the untiring feet of the multitudes of the future. The Goal that He has set before us must be reached, ever more easily, by the sons and daughters of the Original Abode who have unwittingly strayed down to this world of ours. This was the Divine dream that He dreamt, and to make it a Reality is our duty. To make all this possible is the task that lies before us. In its fulfilment lies the fulfilment of the Divine and loving aspiration of our Benevolent Master. Let us heed the clarion call to "Arise ! Awake ! And rest not till this Divinely endowed task is completed to His satisfaction !"

May His Benevolent Grace, His Divine Love, His Eternal Presence, serve to keep our feet firmly planted on the path. May His merciful guidance assist us in fulfilling our duty to Him who is our ALL AND EVERYTHING !

6

CALL OF CONSCIENCE

I came to the feet of my Master, Samarth Guru Mahatma Ramchandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur in the early part of March 1964, not knowing what was spirituality and having, through an exposure to religion, tradition and culture, veered away from those traditions, more emotionally than intellectually. Because whatever association I had till then, with formal modes of worship, rituals, our traditional forms, had in some way, created a feeling of, initially disappointment, subsequently frustration and finally, I should say, (I may confess to you) a feeling of disgust ! Fortunately or unfortunately the major part of my life has been spent in North India, and at one stage I had to live in Benaras, where I graduated from, and the goings-on there among the religious community - among the temples, the cheating, the hypocrisy, the way suffering humanity is dealt with in the citadel of God — were shocking experiences. And when I discussed these things with my so called acharya of the South – I belong to the Vaishnava community and we had our own traditional acharyas — when I discussed with them, all they could say was, "You have to tolerate. God's ways are mysterious. By evil comes good; from darkness comes light." — all these sorts of funny things. None of them could really give me an answer. And having been blessed with sincerity or cursed with sincerity, I used to do all the rituals that I had to do, because I lost my mother at the age of five, and the annual 'Shraddha', I used to do with utmost sincerity, with meticulous

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Talk at Ahmedabad on 21st October 1984.

observance to the 'niyama' and all these things such as the early morning bath, not drinking even water. And when I found how the purohits — who were to come and administer the puja and the rites — behaved, I was horrified. On one occasion, I had the misfortune to be away from Madras and I had to perform the Shraddha ceremony. The purohit who was supposed to come at nine o'clock, didn't turn up. I sent a boy and the boy in his innocence came back and blurted out, "He has performed Shraddha in another house, and he is eating (what they call) the 'Pitru-Bhojan' (the food-offering to the departed soul) you see, and when he is finished with that, he will come here." Now, the Shastra says that when you do pitru-tarpana or pitru-shraddha, that purohit should not eat for the preceding three days. It is a 'Prayaschitta' (act of repentance). But he was eating there, after performing a 'Shraddha' and coming to me to help me perform my mother's Shraddha ! This was the ultimate 'straw on the camel's back'. And on that day, if I may use that phrase, I broke with traditional religion as it is understood. I just said, "This is over." This was a few years before I came to the feet of my Master.

Then, without guidance, I used to do some forms of the Hatha yoga, do some asanas, do some pranayama and ultimately, I should say, my destiny led me to my Master Shri Ramchandraji Maharaj and, if you permit me to say, His training was a series of shocks. I can assure you from personal experience, nothing works like a shock. You know even in common life when a man is on the point of losing his job and the boss calls him and says, "Well, either you quit or ...", it is a shock. We become aware. When there is a market crash, there is a shock. So these shocks are very essential to shake us out of our complacency, of our passive acceptance of everything

that has been said, done in the past, of an intellectual blindness to the teachings of the past. None of us is willing to read for himself and understand for himself. It is easier to listen to some 'pandit' or 'purohit' who is conducting a 'pravachan'. We have no patience, we have no interest to confirm what he reads and what he says by a second reading for ourselves. What he says goes because we have no interest in it. All that we want to do is to listen and walk out, and by the time we are out of the gate, that is forgotten !

So shocks are essential to shake us out of these inner complacencies which, if I may say so, have brought the Indian society to the degraded levels in which we are seeing it today, of which we are all part, you and I and all of us here. My Master administered these shocks progressively because He had no qualms about shocking us. The first shock was when He said,

"Religion is utter nonsense !"

I asked Him, "What do you mean ? Religion is supposed to be the thing from which we draw our succour and by which we have come from the past, and into which we are going in the future, if tradition is to be believed."

He said, "It is the kindergarten school where, at best, you are taught something of ethics, something of morality, and some idea of what is called Divinity or God is given to you. Beyond that, Religion can do nothing." And He chose His own personal example and said that, as His mother was a very pious lady, He started doing the traditional puja. He said,

"I found no benefit in it."

I said, "How long did you do it ?"

He said, "It is immaterial. I don't have to do a thing all my life to find out whether it is useful or useless ! Suppose

a blade doesn't shave properly, you don't shave with it all your life before you discard it. When a pot of rice is boiling, if you take out one grain of rice and press it in your hand, you know whether the whole pot is cooked or not. You don't take it one by one and say, 'this is cooked', 'this is cooked', 'this is cooked'; you will have no rice left to eat !"

It was an argument I had to accept ! So that was the first shock — Religion at best is a kindergarten school where some idea of ethics, some idea of morality and some idea, a very very vague idea or the concept of something called Divinity or God, exists.

I said, "What next ?"

He said, "Well, I started Hatha yoga. I did some 'asanas' and 'pranayamas' and I did for a few days, few months may be, and I found out that was also not beneficial !"

I said, "Surely, Babuji ! One would expect a little more time to be given to Hatha yoga."

He said, "No, if a thing has benefit, it must have benefit from the beginning. I cannot get into a wrong bus, and expect it to go to my destination after three hours ! It is wrong from the moment I stepped into it. Nothing can become right when it is wrong, whether more time is given or less time is given." That again was a very logical argument, you see. I cannot get on to a wrong bus and say, by virtue of moving in it over an extended period of time it can ever possibly take me to the right destination ! His logic was unbeatable !! So He gave up Hatha yoga.

Then He started 'pranayama'. He found psychic disturbances, problems arising in His sleep. So He said, 'Use bhi humne chhod diya' ('I left that also'). Then I said,

"Babuji ! What did you do after that ?"

He said, "Nothing ! I waited patiently, I prayed to God to send me a Master. And after a few years, I went to Fatehgarh and found my Master !"

This is what He said to me.

I said, "In between you did nothing ?"

He said, "It is better to do nothing than to do what is wrong."

It was confusing to me because we have been taught that to do something is better than to do nothing. Here was a man who was preaching me, "To do nothing is better than to do something which is wrong." Well, palpably it was wisdom of the highest order. Like our boys (children) when they study, if they have nothing else to read, they read comics or they read the trash literature that we get today and we are happy. "Arre bhai ! Kuch nahin to kuch to padh raha hai woh !" ("Brother ! Atleast he is reading something !") You see this habit has ruined our conception of what is good and what is bad, that to do something is better than to do nothing, whereas my Master taught me, "When you do not know what is right, or what you should do, DO NOTHING." And that was the highest wisdom He taught me, in the third shock. Then I said,

"What happened when you came to your Master ?"

He said, "When I looked at Him, I found THAT which I sought and my eyes never turned elsewhere, I saw and I fell."

Now we are familiar with the other quotation, "I came, I saw, I conquered." That was the idea of conquest, of victory, of power. Here was the summation of surrender ! "I saw, I fell, I never rose again !" People often ask, "What is surrender ?" you see, I think those three

short words — "See, fall and do not rise" — these epitomise the value of surrender.

So like this, I was administered shock after shock. Then I said, "What is this spirituality of which you are teaching about ?"

He said, "Dekho isme kai baten hoti hain. Log samaj nahi pate." ("See ! There are many things in this (spirituality). People are unable to understand.")

I said, "Aap to samjha sakte hain ?" ("You can teach me ?")

He said, "People confuse Religion for Spirituality. They are called spiritual discourses, when they are nothing more than religious discourses ! You cannot change the content of a bottle of water by calling it wine. It will not become wine. But these people are cheating the public by calling them spiritual discourses. The poor people don't know the difference between Religion and Spirituality." I said, "Aap to hamen samjhayiye ?" ("Please let me understand.") He said, "Religion deals with dogma, tradition, ritualistic worship — only three things."

I said, "What about 'moksha tatva' ? What about after-life ? I am supposed to be lifted up to Realisation."

He said, "Bekaar hai ! (Useless !) No religion can do it !"

I said, "Babuji ! Surely you are not denying the efficacy of the Sanatana Dharma of which so much has been written !"

He said, "If you have eyes, you can see for yourself. There have never been more temples in India than there are today. And there has never been more degradation ! There has never been more moral decrepitude ! There has

never been more corruption ! There has never been more dishonesty, viciousness, lust !"

I said, "Surely — you don't attribute it to temples ?"

He said, "I don't attribute it to temples. But the existence of the temples is the direct index of the fall in society of moral standards and values."

I said, "Surely Babuji ! I am not able to understand this idea that when there are more temples it shows more moral degradation." He said, "Bhaiya, socho, kisi nagar me jahan ek haspatal tha, wahan bees haspatal ho gaye (Brother ! Suppose that in a city which had only one hospital, there are 20 hospitals now), what will you think ?" I said, "Vahaan beemari jyada hai." ("Sickness has increased there.") "Ab dekho jahan mandir jyada hote vahaan kya hota hai ?" ("See, now, what happens when there are more temples ?")

I said, "Guilty conscience jyada hai." ("There is more of guilty conscience.")

"To tumhare muhse tumhi ne iska jawab de diya !" ("So you have yourself answered your question.")

And again it was an unbeatable argument — the more the temples, the more the moral degradation; the more the fall in values, the more the corruption.

He said, "You know, religion deals with you in an external way, whatever good may have existed in it in the past. Undeniably there were values in it when the founders started it; there is no denying that. But through generations they have become corrupted, today it is a money making machine."

I said, "All right, what about spirituality ?"

He said, "In spirituality we deal with the essence. That which is here inside you."

I said, "Is it the soul ?"

He said, "Haan (yes) 'Soul' keh sakte ho. Lekin woh soul bhi nahin hai." ("Yes, you can call it the soul but it is not the soul either !") I said, "Soul bhi nahin hai ? (It is not the soul either ?) But I thought we deal only with the 'atma'. The 'sharir' (body) and the 'atma' (soul), are the two 'tatvas' (substances) we have been taught about."

He said, "Vaise tatvon to bahut hote hain, lekin hum essence ke bare mein apko batana chahte hain." ("That way there are many 'tatvas', but I want to tell you about essence.")

I said, "What is this essence ?"

He said, "That which sustains YOU through eternity."

I said, "Is it not the soul ?"

He said, "No."

This was the next shock. Because we have been taught to understand that the soul goes, you know, by transmigration from body to body, lives from the beginning to the end, it is incorruptible, it is not created.

He said, "As the body lives by the soul, the soul also lives by something and that is this Divine transmission which we call — 'pranahuti', which the Guru pours into the heart of the disciple, which is the food for the 'atma' itself. Therefore the 'atma' is a living breathing thing, it can be destroyed."

I said, "Any proof of this ?"

He said, "Today's existence ! Most people are soulless !!"

I said, "Surely there is something, some remnant left."

He said, "Yes, it is like a balloon without any air in it. It has to be inflated again."

So the whole Sahaj Marg siddhanth (Philosophy), rests on the fundamental assumption that while the body exists by the soul, the soul HAS to exist by something else, which has to be infused into it by a Guru who has command over the powers of Nature and is therefore called a Saint. The Guru by virtue of His connection with the Ultimate, what you call Brahma laya in Sanskrit, is able to transmit that energy into the heart, recoup the soul and make it flower again. And this you have found in yogic terminology as the 'adho mukhi' (downward facing) lotus, which becomes 'Oordhwa mukhi' (upward facing) and then opens and flowers and then falls the nectar into this. So the references in yoga are not false. I said, "Then what has happened to these references, Babuji ? You yourself are saying these are correct and it did exist in the past."

He said, "Seventy two generations before Raja Dasharath, the system of transmission existed. It was lost."

"How was it lost ?"

He said, "You know the Indians are a peculiar race. Everything that was valuable, everything that was sacred, they made it secret and the person would not transmit it even to his 'chelas' and when he died, it died with him."

And this is true not only of spiritual values, spiritual methods, spiritual disciplines, but also of arts and crafts and so many other traditions you know, like making even pickles, medicines ! There have been medicines for snake-bites, simple things, but for which they make a mystical nonsense out of it and say that "You have got to have 'upadesh' (Instruction). Then only it will work." Medicine works not by 'upadesh', it works because it is a medicine ! So by mystifying, by cultifying, all with the idea of

'nakar', our traditions have been corrupted, the originality has been lost, the reality has been diffused into nothingness, and we are left today with false values, ephemeral values, lies, cheats. And we go to them for spiritual succour, when we are troubled and all that they are able to do is to give us some 'vibhooti' (sacred ash) or some prasad and say, 'Beta, tum theek ho jaaoge.' (Son, you will be all right.) I said, "Babuji ! What about this vibhooti ! (sacred ash !) People go to gurus for vibhooti !"

He said, "You know, you go to gurus for Reality and they give you ashes !" So we are left with the ashes of Reality ! And my Master, by progressive shocks administered one after another like this, was able to infuse Reality into us. It is not something which you can explain over a 'half-an-hour talk'. It took me twenty years. It is a thing which you learn through eternity. It is something which is an eternal pursuit. We can START at one moment of time, but it never ends. So spirituality is that which deals with the essence not with the body, not with the soul, not with the panchatatvas (five substances) or the gunas (their properties) or anything of that sort. I wish to stress this because many people say, "Sir ! He is spiritual. But his behaviour has not changed." Now a behaviour is treated by psychology as a subject called 'behavioural psychology'. A man may have a very good character, but his behaviour may not be congenial as far as you are aware. See, I have a good barber who, whenever he is shaving, goes on talking and I don't like it. It is his behaviour. But he is the best barber in town. You go to a cloth shop, and the best salesman is an irritant. He says, "What money have you brought ? What are you going to buy ?" But he is the best salesman. Otherwise he wouldn't be employed there. We want not the thing itself but we want the wrapping. You know modern packaging

technology survives on this foolishness of the human being, that the thing which is inside is not so much valued, as the outer packaging in which it is wrapped. Therefore you see the trash sold in so-called book shops with lascivious pictures printed on top, which both the 65-year-old and 16-year-old want, on the basis of the picture. When they read it through, they are disappointed because there is nothing inside which the picture displays outside. Religion does the same thing — 'Swarna rathas' (gold chariots), gold covering for the 'vigraha' (idol). Is that idol going to perform less of a service to you, had it been just mere stone ? Why should it be covered with gold ? Why should lakhs and millions of rupees be spent on gold rathas, and 'acharyas' made much of. You see the publicity they give them in the press. Is a gold god more than a silver god, or is a stone god less than an ivory god ? Does that mean that god has to be measured in terms of tola content of gold ? We have corrupted God Himself. Our temples are a living testimony to the corruption that even God suffers at our hands. We besmirch His name, we falsify His generosity, we deny His love, when we go and put prasad and ten rupees in the hundi, and say, "God, take this 10 rupees and raise my salary by 1000 rupees !"; "God ! Take this 10 rupees and make me Managing Director of the company; now I am only an Executive Director"; "God ! Take this 10 rupees, I am a civil court judge, make me a supreme court judge." For ten rupees, hum sauda karne ko taiyaar hain Ishwar ke saath. (For ten rupees we are ready to clinch a deal with God.) And this religion we are quoting from every platform 'Satyameva jayate', the most shameful thing in the Indian tradition, that you have to put this slogan on your national emblem ! It is a testimony to the lying character of the Indian, not from today but from the time of Vedas.

From the Vedic rishis' time we have been told 'Satyam Vadah', 'Satyam Vadah', 'Satyam Vadah' (tell the truth, tell the truth, tell the truth). Now in no society have you to be told to tell the truth, if you are already telling the truth ! When we read in railway coaches, 'Do not spit', what is the conclusion we come to ? That people spit. "Keep latrines clean. Flush after use." The Westerner sees this and is amused. He says, "Don't your people flush the toilet after use, Chari, that you have to put up a notice ?" The unfortunate conclusion is that they don't ! 'Satyam Vadah' means what ! We have been liars since eternity. 'Is desh jisme Ganga behati hai' ! (This country where the holy Ganga river is flowing) — you see this, the great flaunting tradition that we fool ourselves with and are trying to fool the rest of the world with, that we are a nation of Saints, we are a nation of incorruptibles — "See ! 'Satyam Vadah'." This is what the ancient tradition says and the Westerner and the Easterner both laugh and say, "Fool ! Have you to SAY 'speak the truth', if you have been speaking the truth ?"

So gentlemen, ladies, brothers and sisters, this is the state of affairs. Things will not change by white-washing them. You have a mud wall which is being eaten away by rains, by weather, by white-ants. White-washing it, will not make it sound. It has to be broken down and a cement and brick wall put up in its place. It is left to the present generation of human beings, to correct the mistakes of the past and leave a better heritage for the future. This is the destiny. It is an important duty of the present generation. We are signally failing in this because, out of our selfishness we are only concerned with ourselves. No parent is today worried about where his child goes; no parent today is worried about what his children's marks are. So long as they go to school, the mother is happy that

the children are away and she can cook in peace for her loving husband who is in the club, dancing with somebody else. The father is happy that the mother is busy cooking so dutifully even if he is cheating her and fooling her; the child is happy that neither is attending to it, so it can do what it likes. Triple selfishness ! And we are talking, we are bewailing, we are condoling with each other on the fate of society, what is going to happen in the future, when WE make that future ourselves. So there is no government, there is no society, there is no God. Even God cannot save a humanity which seeks to condemn itself by its selfishness, by its lustful pursuits, its avarice, all centred on the self. " 'I' must have this, this and this." "What about your children ?" "Arre, for what am I earning ?" Very pious, you know ! "It is only for my children !" And thirty years later the child says, "My father was a damn fool. If he had not left me this wealth, I would not have gone to dogs like this. I would have earned an honest living with my two hands. He has corrupted my existence." He has no love for you because when he is old enough to understand what you have been doing, he sees what all practices we have indulged in, in building up the so-called wealth for him, which he dislikes, which he hates, which frustrates him, which denies him his humanity, his manliness, everything. It emasculates him. We have had this lesson from the West in the so-called, you know the hippie movement, when they deny their parents, when they condemn their parents for destroying the heritage of the past — which should have been handed over to them as a sacred inheritance to be passed on from one generation to the other. The only heritage which we are passing on, I am sorry to say is the 'HUF account' carefully garnered, nurtured and passed on !

So you will excuse me if I am a little harsh, but my Guru shocked me, it is my duty to shock you into some awareness that "things are not all that good in the state of Denmark." (It is a Shakespearean quotation — All is not well in the state of Denmark.) Here we have been fooling each other on the political front, on the religious front, on the moral front. We are all happy, because we all know we are all liars and cheats, by mutual recognition and mutual back patting, "Shu karvanu Saheb." (What to do, Sir ?) This has become the standard phrase in Gujarati, its translation the standard phrase in all languages ! There is a lot to be done. 'Shu karvanu' means, do this, this and this. The way is available. Change yourself. By changing yourself you change your family environment, your children grow up better, they become moral, when they see their parents are truth-loving. Unfortunately you know, we start teaching our children to tell lies from the age of three. Bell rings, somebody comes, "Bol do papa nahin hai ghar mein." ("Tell the caller that Dad is not at home.") And then later on when he tells lies to you, you beat him. Poor fellow, YOU have taught him to tell lies ! He says, "Papa, how is it different when you told me you are not at home and now you are beating me for saying — 'I am not at home'." "Jhoot nahin bolna sach bolna." (Don't tell lies, tell truth.) The child is bewildered, you see. You are at double standards yourself, which, in your adult stature, adult wisdom you are able to handle. Like we handle two accounts, three accounts, we are able to handle two sets of moral values, multiple sets of moral values, but the child has only one set, his parents' behaviour. There begins children's indiscipline which goes on in the school, which goes on in the college, which creates communism, which creates goondaism of the streets, a rampant destruction let loose by a cry of the

heart against parents, against society. They cannot destroy their parents, thank heavens, our children cannot destroy us ! They don't have the courage. They love us too much ! But we have the love which destroys our children !

So spirituality teaches us what is the real meaning of love. Love protects; love does not violate; love nurtures. If you put a chimney around a lamp and immediately the lamp is blown out, what would you think of the chimney ? It is after all to protect it from the winds and to keep that tiny flame alight. So we have to learn what is love, what is morality, what is ethics. Yahaan "Shu karvanu che" se kaam nahin chalega ! (Nothing can be accomplished here with 'Shu karvanu'). There is a lot to be done. The beginning is now, here. So those of you who have the courage to say, "Yes, brother, I wish to do this sincerely because when I change, I change a part of the universe; and when I change a part of universe, the totality HAS to change"; there is no question about this. Every individual change is reflected throughout the universe. It is said that not a leaf falls in the universe that He does not know about. And this, you know, we create. There are self-helping arguments, "What can we do Sir, society is like this", conveniently forgetting that the whole of the society is sick, we want to be healthy. Everybody is begging, we want to live and eat 'Sandesh' and 'Garam masala' (sweet and savouries). Everybody is foolish and paying taxes, we want to be in the citadel of tax evasion. There we have no choice you know — 'I', 'It is for my benefit !' But when you say you change, the society will change, then we would prefer to wait ! We would prefer to evade payment of our railway fare when everybody pays, forgetting that in everybody, I am also part of it. Isn't it ? I mean if you question yourselves, your hearts, nobody can deny the truth of what is being said here, whether we are willing to

accept it, face ourselves with it and do something about it. Well, my prayer to my Master is that He give us the courage, because it needs courage. It is very easy to forget or, I would say, it is even more easy to remember that anything we do might destroy these false edifices, citadels that we have built of a false security, of a false wealth, of a false social eminence, nurtured by nothing more than ill-gotten money, where a man is great because he has ten lakhs, another man is greater because he has fifteen, and he is the greatest because he has seven crores ! What is his education ? "Kai vandho nathi saheb, tran karod to chej tyan ?" (No difficulty, Sir ! He has three crores rupees there !) So, this is our society ! You see, we have forgotten values. Today we have no respect for teachers, we have no respect for aged people. Why ? Because they are a drain on us. Every old father has to be supported by his sons. In our selfishness you know we grudge the 30 or 40 Rs. that the poor fellow eats — it is a mere pittance of the tax that we have to pay – pittance ! It doesn't even pay for the paper on which we write our false accounts ! But we are, you know, denying the old man because he is not contributing. Today is the day of productivity ! Contribution !! So old people are relegated to a dungeon, in a beautifully built house with a puja room conveniently allotted to them, to continue to perpetuate the paucity on themselves and pray for wealth to us.

So brothers and sisters, I have to humbly and very forcefully request to you, to re-examine yourselves. It is all right, every man has a right to destroy himself, but he has no right to destroy his inside, much less his family which is all we are doing. And it is said that God, in His Ultimate wisdom, is giving us sufficient leash, sufficient time, with immense patience, with immense mercy. He says, "Theek hai (all right), let me see how far can he go in

this play of corruption and ill-gotten gains and stupidity and vices !" But we have to remember that a time will come when we have to answer for it. This is what He says. Let us not worry about what He says, but let us worry about what this (pointing to his heart) says, which is more immediate. My heart says, "Do this and don't do this."; let us obey it. You call it God, the conscience, let us obey it so that the tiniest voice can become the most powerful. One day 'I' will be its servant, instead of it being my servant.

Thank you !

7

REVELATIONS

We have come to the concluding part of our Founder's Day Celebrations. I think this has been a very well attended and, thanks to the co-operation between Salem and Coimbatore centres, a well conducted celebration. We have also had the pleasure of listening to a uniformly good standard of lectures. All our brothers and sisters who spoke, have given us some very valuable thoughts and, knowingly or unknowingly, they have exposed the truths of the various principles of Sahaj Marg. Some of them, I am sure, did not know what they have spoken about. As is usual with Divine things, the speaker himself does not know what he says, why he says it, and what is the truth behind what he is saying. When we become totally merged with the subject (and perhaps it may be a little incorrect to say that Master is the subject of our meditation or the subject of our thoughts, He IS that !), we can only speak what He speaks, what He would have spoken, and the truth that He would have revealed.

My Master did not reveal the truths in the traditional sense saying, "I am going to tell you one truth ! This is it ! Note it down !" He spoke, and every word that came out of His mouth was the Truth. We have been conditioned by education, by society, and by the fallen moral and ethical standards to expect to find only certain things as truth embedded in a mass of verbiage. This is the unfortunate training we have gone through, so much so that when a great man speaks, or Master speaks, we want

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Talk at the Founder's day celebration at Coimbatore on 9th December 1984.

to pick out some of the words or some of the thoughts and say, "This was the truth," as if the rest could not have been the truth ! I think this is one of the greatest humiliations to which we subject our Master in assigning grades of truth to what He says, such as, "Some are absolute truths, some are relative truths and the rest are for common consumption !" It is said that when a Master breathes, He breathes out infinity; when He breathes in, He breathes in infinity. So it is the play of infinity upon infinity, and everything is the truth even if He says mundane things like "You are Ramaswamy !" That is also the truth. Just because He addresses Ramaswamy as Ramaswamy, it does not cease to be the truth — it is very much the truth. So let us learn, let us accept the fact that we do not have to search for the truth when Master speaks. All is truth, and nothing but the truth can come out of Him !

Now what are the truths that our brothers and sisters have unwittingly revealed to us today ? I think one of the most remarkable ones was the one about KARNA (one of the characters appearing in the 'Mahabharata') that he had to surrender even his 'Dharma' (the effect of good deeds) as it is said. It may sound a little unfair that the Lord Himself should come to His own devotee and say, "Give me all the 'dharma' you have performed, so that I can take your life." But this is only the vindication of the truths of the Vedas that we have to rise above both 'Punyam' (virtue) and 'Papam' (vice). If 'Papam' has no value, 'Punyam' has no value either. It is OUR human intelligence, OUR human understanding, which has assigned a different set of values to the 'Papams' and a different set of values to the 'Punyams'. This makes us hold on to one and release the other, not knowing that where we hold on to one, we have to hold on to the other also whether we like it or not. You cannot have only one

side of a coin, you have to take both. So also one who holds on to 'Punyam', holds on to 'Papam' too, whether he likes it or not. And this was the truth that Krishna had to teach Karna at the moment of his death as if saying, "Fool ! Part with it because with it you cannot reach me."

This is what our Master says — 'good' samskara is as bad as 'bad' samskara because with samskaras you are going to be reborn if not as a saint, a sinner, and if not as a sinner, a saint. But you have to be reborn. So this was perhaps the greatest truth.

As for the 'Viswaroopa Darsana' (vision of the cosmic form) it was a foolish thing to have indulged in, because as Master said in His Munich message, "Divinity is a PLAY and Divine the way." So Krishna was playing with Arjuna like a cat playing with a mouse — with due apologies to those of you who are very keenly bent on the orthodox traditions — it was just a play ! It was a 'tamasha' (a joke) showing Himself with a thousand heads and thousands of hands. No true 'Bhakta' (devotee) of the Lord could have been more misguided ! He should have said, "Krishna ! Come on and stop playing the fool with me. What is this nonsense you are indulging in ? Am I a child to be frightened by your thousand heads and thousands of hands ? They are no more real than I am, because you can change forms like a Chameleon and show me this and that. For heaven's sake, don't treat me like a 'bacha' (child). You say I am your 'bhakta' (devotee) and have not shown this (vision) to any rishis or munis. Are you playing with me ? Are you cheating me ? Are you lying to me ?" These are the questions that a devotee of the Lord could have asked the Lord Himself ! Instead of that, that poor fellow got frightened and cried out, "Please assume your ordinary form", as if that was more real ! If tradition is to

be believed, we must remember that, that form of the Lord was also cremated !

So the Bhagavad Gita has to be taken with a pinch of salt ! Not every revelation is a valuable revelation because what is revealed must be the Truth, must be the Reality, must be the Ultimate. Therefore, I think Master has said (He has written about it in very guarded terms) that the Viswaroopa Darsana, AFTER ALL, pertains only to the Brahmanda Mandal. AFTER ALL ! It is nothing very wonderful because He showed what He could, and called it the 'Virat Swaroop'. Now, whether God shows Himself to be an atom, or as the Ultimate cosmic form, both are forms. What is the reality behind the forms ? I don't think Krishna showed, or Arjuna saw, what That was. This seems to be the tragedy of most thinkers that, even at the last moment, they are halted by a form being presented to them which is either beautiful or delightful or attractive or fearful. And with that they are satisfied ! To me the chapter on Viswaroopa Darsana is a travesty of the truth; it is a play with Arjuna as if Krishna is testing, "Let me see if this fellow is happy with the Cosmic form, let me see if he goes beyond that." Now, if that was the truth, the Gita should have stopped with that chapter. He need not have gone on to the 18th Chapter and said, "Sarva Dharmaan Parithyajya mamekam saranam vraja" (Give up all dharmas and surrender to me alone).

Why on earth should the Lord show Himself in His absoluteness and THEN teach him to surrender all over again ? It becomes redundant to do so. So this is the message of the Gita that I have tried to piece together from whatever Master has taught me of Sahaj Marg. I think, Krishna did a greater service to Karna than He ever did to Arjuna, and we call Him Karna's enemy ! As one of the speakers said, "He showed Himself to the

embodiment of sin i.e. Duryodhana, for one reason. He showed Himself to Arjuna for another reason. He showed Himself to Karna for a third reason." Which was the transcendental reason of all ? I think it was to Karna that He gave the maximum Grace and removed the last impediment from his way i.e. his holding on to 'Punya Phalam' (fruits of virtue). You know in Telugu they say, "Tholinu Chachinna Puja Phalamu" meaning fruits of worship are what are holding us earthbound here and making us beggars, life after life for more 'Punyam'. One of the Alwars (leading devotees of Vaishnava cult), I think, said that he would like to be reborn again and again to serve the Lord ! Master laughed when the story was told to Him and said in Hindi, "Eisi Bevakufi Kahan hogi ?" ("Where can you find such great foolishness ?")

So this was the interlinked message of the Gita, two of our speakers presented and the inner 'tatwa' (Philosophy) is that which we have always got to penetrate. You see even when a great man speaks, even when a saint speaks, what we understand is what we understand. No more ! So it is necessary that we seek to enlarge our understanding. How to do this ? Not by referring to dictionaries nor by learning languages nor by studying the original texts. They are all meaningless excursions into the fields of knowledge — the more you learn, you realise that the more you have got to learn because that is an endless quest. The thirst for knowledge is as misleading, as evanescent, and as ephemeral as the search for pleasure, for instance. It is another samskara. I do not differentiate between the thirst for pleasure and the thirst for knowledge because both are leading you on and on like the carrot in front of the donkey's nose. There is no limit to them. If one is a desire, the other is also a desire. Desire for knowledge is no more sacred or holy than the desire

for pleasure. So what is the difference between one desire and another desire ? No difference — obviously !

We have therefore to follow a path; we have to follow a Master who will not indulge in all these trickeries and childish bye-plays showing us forms, showing us manifestations of Himself. And then, I do not know whom He fooled — Himself or Arjuna more ! For a person who comes patently to guide humanity back to Himself — that was His own statement in the Gita, "I come again and again to rescue 'Dharma', to punish the evil-doers, to re-establish this and that, and protect the doer of the good etc." — that is all He did, with due apologies to the Lord of the Universe, or the 'Yuga Purusha' as He is called. He achieved nothing more than re-establishing 'Dharma', killing 'Kamsa' and protecting a few doers of the good — some 'rishis' here and some 'pundits' there ! What did He do as a Cosmic Purpose ? You call Him a Cosmic Being ! What Cosmic purpose did He fulfil ? Either it is hidden from us or it is not stated in the Gita, or the unfortunate, and perhaps irreverent, conclusion is that He did not do anything more than that.

This brings us to the point, "What has my Master done about which we are so happy here ?" As they say in the Vedas, we can only describe it in the negative. "Neti, Neti" meaning "not this, not this." He did NOT fool people. He did NOT show forms. He did not entice us with promises that if you do this, I will do that for you. He lived a simple, absolutely blameless and, I would even say, meritless life because, if it were a meritorious life, it again falls into the category of having one description attached to it, an adjective attached to it and a meritorious life would lead Him also back to this earth. So His was an existence balanced on the knife edge between two opposites — neither sick nor healthy, neither rich nor

poor, neither educated nor uneducated, neither wise nor foolish, neither tall nor short. He conformed to the 'Neti, Neti' truth of the Vedanta. You could not say of the Master He was a kind man; you could not also say that He was unkind. What was His kindness in feeding some people, in feeding abhyasis, in giving away a shawl? Well, He Himself said, "If you consider human beings as your brothers, it is your duty and not kindness." So to throw back Master's own words at the Master, by giving away your own shawl to a man who is shivering in the cold, it does not become an act of kindness. It was His duty to humanity. He was the embodiment of duty, he could not but give it away ! So where is the kindness ?

I believe He was very kind to us in teaching us not to set values, artificial values, exaggerated values, inflated values, taught to us by society, by religious heritage, by social custom. Do not set false values on the actions of human beings. Do not apportion false values to the thoughts of human beings. Going beyond this, do not even seek to give credit to Divinity itself if it manifests to you with a form, talks to you with a mouth, frightens you, threatens you, entices you, tempts you and goads you into action — which It does for Its benefit as Lord Krishna very correctly says. But He comes for YOUR benefit, to take you unto Himself, to make you as formless as He is in His essence, to make you as qualityless as He is in His essence, to make you as existenceless as He is in His essence; because, of such a person, you cannot say that He exists, you can neither say that He does not exist. That is the great truth which the Master Himself pointed out from 'Naasadiya Sukta', "You cannot say that He exists, you cannot say that He does not exist either ! He is at the mid-point. He transcends both existence and non-existence."

So these few truths — Viswaroopa Darsana, Karna, etc., it is amazing how our speakers are able to reveal truths unknown to themselves — because of the Grace of the Master who speaks through them. And they have also been shattered to hear the explanation of their own words to themselves ! That is what dependence on the Master brings. This is what dedication to His work brings. This is what following Him brings. As somebody very beautifully said, "It is not Central Region or this Region or that Region which sould be our goal, though many people still hanker after and aspire for regions, states and conditions." Master has very clearly said : "It must be the stateless state, it must be the conditionless condition." And what can that be but what He was, what He is and what He shall always be. The beingless Being, the conditionless Condition, a personalityless Person — all these opposing attributes which seem to have no meaning for us, unless we actually experience them in our own lives.

Lastly, I would like to end with that reference to science by one of the brothers here. It is said in Science that there are two or three categories of forces — the strong force, known as the sub-nuclear force which holds the neutrons and the protons together in the nucleus. It is called the strong force but it can act only over the distances prevailing inside a nucleus. It has no strength to draw something six feet away or a hundred feet away. It acts within its own limits of the nucleus itself. Whereas 'gravity' is called the weak force but it acts over enormous distances, cosmic distances, distances measured in light years, millions of light years. The weak force acts over a distance, the strong force acts only within the nucleus, within the boundaries of only sub-nuclear distances involved within the miniscule atom. Now this must give us

reason to think over two principles (i) that of invertendo — that the strong does not act as well as the weak and the weak acts farther and longer than the strong. This is one aspect. (ii) that of love — which has no force at all. So you extrapolate this truth and bring it to that force which Master used to call the 'Forceless force', which He called the 'Transmission' which I say is only His love for us because He was only transmitting Love. It is not a force; it is not anything else. 'Tatvavadis' (Philosophers) who like to mystify things, like to say it is His essence; some people say it is Life, some others say it is 'Pranasya Prana' (life of life) but I prefer to believe and have reason to believe that it is His love which was being poured into our hearts which we call the Transmission, which we call Pranahuti. Being forceless, it will act, not only over infinite distances to the very borders of Infinity (the cosmic infinity, the physical infinity) but also through eternity of time. Love alone can act, breaking the barriers of space and time. No other force exists which can do it. Gravity needs bodies to act upon. If you are a spirit, gravity cannot act upon it. If you are a mere soul without a body, gravity cannot act upon it. You need atleast that much matter as exists in light, in a photon of light, because it has been proved that light can be deviated by gravitational force. But Love can act whether you have a body or not. Even when you are just a soul, it can act upon you because that is how Master guarantees our further progress even after we leave this body (as we are bound to do one day). We are not going to live eternally in this body. This is a brief existence upon earth for Him to come to us, for us to cherish Him, to love Him, for us to establish an association so that when His body disappears and my body too, we can yet react and interact and love each other and progress hand in hand, to the very Ultimate End !

So these are a few lessons which we have been told today, some of which I have tried to amplify for your sake. Now it is time for those who have to leave. So I say we part only to meet again wherever it may be next time.

Thank you.

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ACCEPT HIM IN HIS ESSENCE

I regret not being able to speak to you all in Telugu, because I don't have any proficiency. But having been able to understand something of what our brothers and sisters have spoken today and yesterday, starting with Dr. Kuppuswami Garu and having been listening to so many people, so many years in Sahaj Marg, starting with my Master at the top, down to the lowliest, mere beginners of Sahaj Marg, one thing I have observed — I cannot say it is a discovery — when we put on red glasses we see the world as red, when we put on green glasses we see it as green. In the reverse way also it operates. What we say reveals what we are, what we do reveals what we are, what we think reveals what we are. So these barriers, these filters, work both ways — the one who sees, sees the coloured world, and the one who is outside, looks through that window into the interior, he also sees the other person as coloured. So I have found it necessary to caution my brothers and sisters, not to set too much store by what people say or do because we can hardly know what they are by just judging them from what they say and what they do, as they cannot judge us by what we say and what we do. So our actions, our thoughts — they are impediments to mutual understanding from both sides of the fence. From my neighbour's house if they throw rubbish into my garden I get annoyed. But when I throw rubbish over the very same fence from my garden, I think I am cleaning my house. So this sort of 'across-the-fence' attitude — it breeds animosities, it breeds dissensions, it is the cause for wars;

Talk at Tirupati on 30th December 1984.

CHARIJI

whether it be inter-personal, international, inter-religious, it makes no difference. Because where there is a barrier, where there is a fence put up between two entities, whether they be individual or political entities or even two religions, there is going to be trouble across the border sooner or later. And the only person whom we could see — we have all seen that — where this barrier did not exist, was the Master Himself, because He did not wear coloured glasses at all. People have said much about His generosity, about His kindness, about His love, all of which I have questioned at various times with considerable logic, spiritual logic too. That I shall explain later. But when He did not have coloured glasses He saw us as what we are. He didn't judge us by our speech and by our actions.

It shows, we could see Him without any barriers interposed by Him, to our understanding of Him. So we could see the Master, in some measure differently from what we see in each other. That we could not see Him fully was not His fault because we still had our coloured glasses on our eyes. You see, it takes two to play this game of clear vision, clear understanding, perfect understanding; it is not enough if I remove the glasses from my eyes and have transparent ones. You should also do it. Otherwise you are still impeded in your understanding. I am making bold enough to say this, even though I am faced with a galaxy of academic luminaries in Tirupati. Such an assembly used to make me very nervous in the first few days, when I came to Tirupati to see Dr. Varadachari in the good old days, in the golden days of my youth in Sahaj Marg. I benefited very considerably from Dr. Varadachari's association, and it may not be much of a secret to you all, to know that it was Master's orders that I should go to him at least once a month, which brought me

here. He was one of those rare persons who also never judged things like that; and it is one of my personal sadnesses and it is one of the losses to the Mission that he passed away so early. But the point I am coming to is, in those days with all this galaxy of academic luminaries present, I never looked upon Dr. Varadachari as a Doctor. He was a Doctor among Doctors, but his behaviour, his love, his attachment to the abhyasis whom he may have cursed left and right for half an hour and then with the utmost compassionate look, loving look he would say "Yes, look here my dear friend, let us sit and meditate." And that dissolved away all the half an hour or one hour of lectures he used to give in a very bullet firing manner.

So, we have to be Doctors and make sure that the other man does not feel that we are Doctors. Therein lies the dignity of the professional teaching that he would teach without being a teacher, that we are able to be a Master without being a Master. I remember my Master once told me, "I am the servant of Humanity."

So, it was precisely because He was able to serve us and we were able to appreciate that service that He was doing for us continuously with every living breath of His body, that we were able to experience this miracle of transformation within ourselves, that we perceived the one who was serving us, as a Master. In service alone lies Mastery. In Mastery lies the slavery. One who wants to be a Master must be a slave. One who is prepared to be a slave becomes a Master.

I am reminded of something, you know, in the military sense because my friend Capt. Murthy is thrusting upon me his military samskaras; it is an axiom of the Army that "He alone can command who has learnt to obey." One who has never learnt to obey, one who has

never obeyed, can never command, because he doesn't know what to do. So my humble request — let us not colour our views, let us not put barriers to the inputs that we are receiving from outside whether they be sensory, whether they be through the medium of the mind, whether they be even intuitive, let us not colour them by the glasses that we wear and then ruin our own spiritual future. You know one of the great religious traditions of the West, has constantly cautioned its practicants that a day may come when you may hear the divine voice but be ever alert that it is not the voice of the devil.

Now I can't conceive of a situation in the Sahaj Marg system where an abhyasi can rise to the level of direct communion with the Ultimate and then has to be cautioned "Beware, it could be the devil". Such a thing cannot exist. Because at the highest level of spiritual evolution where there is all wisdom, all humaneness, all compassion, all love, how can such things as devilish voices, if they do exist, how can they ever intrude into my consciousness ? I once queried Master in relation to an abhyasi whom we introduced into the satsangh and later found was not morally adequate to be introduced into our satsangh, and to whom Master had given three sittings, and whom Master was praising. I asked him, "Babuji, how is it that you didn't know all these ?" He said, "My vision does not descend to lower levels."

So it is no use talking about the Master, my beloved Master, my beloved Babuji, 'you are this, you are that'. You see, we are all liars every time we praise Him and we refuse to emulate His divine way of looking at things, His compassionate way of dealing with people, His merciful way of solving human situations of morality, His most generous way of doling out His immense spiritual fortune to every deserving or undeserving beggar who crosses the

streets; if we just mouth these empty terms, I am sorry to say that 99,999 out of one lakh times, it is empty phraseology. For instance, when one of our Preceptors in America gave an introductory talk and praised Master to the skies "He is the Divine incarnate. We see today on the stage of America, the divine personality enthroned in a merely human body, this that and the other", Master beckoned me and said, "Ask him to stop this nonsense." I said, 'Babuji, why are you objecting. He is only saying what you are.' He said, "Until he knows me as I am, if he says I am this and that, he is telling lies. You have a right to say I am Divine, you have a right to say I am the Ultimate, you have a right to say I am Perfect when you in your experience have seen these things in me. Till then you are a liar." These are my Master's words. And excuse me, if I sometimes appear to talk less than what I should of my Master, it is because I don't wish to tell lies. I only say what I have seen, I have only written what I have felt and experienced myself in His company and that is the truth.

I request this from you also — let us not flatter that old man, because all flattery is false -- it is an axiom of the English language that flattery is falsehood. We stand up everytime and mouth empty phrases like Divine, and this, that and the other, and now more so than ever, in the confidence that the old man no longer can hear what we are saying. I beg your pardon, because in His presence we have told Him lies, in His presence we have by empty eulogies denigrated Him.

When we praise something without knowing what it is, it is ridiculous. You know, once I entered a drawing room and one of my friends was with me and at a distance there was a beautiful vase of flowers, and my friend was all eulogy for those flowers. He said, "What lovely

flowers, what divine flowers, what glorious colours." The whole tirade, I can only call it, of eulogising was shattered by the wife of my friend, who said that they are plastic flowers from Hong Kong (laughing). So when we praise something, without knowing what we are praising, without knowing the qualities we wish to praise, we are falling into the old ritualistic, ridiculous nonsense of this 'Sahasra Nama Archana', 'Ashtottara Sahasra Nama', 'Ashtottara Sahasra Sankya' — all this foolishness, we don't know what we are praising and we say — 'Twameva mata cha pita twameva, ...'. When did you ever see Him as the mother, or the father or God ? So let us not perpetuate lies.

You see, it is said in Latin "De Martris Nirnisi bonum" — "of the dead, speak nothing but the good." I am at variance with that wisdom, I would say — of the dead, speak nothing but the truth. The greatest offering is not the floral offering that you put up to Master's picture. The greatest *archana* that we can wash His feet with, are the tears of love and the words of truth that we can speak about Him at any, every and each of the occasions.

I am telling this to you very bluntly. You know, when my book "Garden of Hearts" was published, it was published after approval by Master. He had read most of it. I asked Him before it was printed "Babuji, there are many things here I have related which the public might view as being derogatory to your august Personality." He said, "Such as what ?" I said, "Such as your physical weakness, your occasional lapses of memory, your confusion sometimes." He said, "You are only telling the truth." I said, "Yes Babuji, but you know, people may not like the truth." He said, "That is not your business. You tell the truth about me as you have seen it. That is enough."

Now, I am ashamed to say that some people want us to present Babuji as a six foot six (6'6") Monster with a 84" chest, you know, and I think that is one of the reasons why we put upon poor Lord Krishna, the Yuga Purusha as we call him, also the husbandhood of 16,000 wives. Because man measures the strength of his Master by his own manifestations of strength. If I am virile I think my Master should be virile, if I am intelligent I think my Master should be intelligent, if I am a frog I think my Master should be a frog, if I am rich my Master should be rich. This is again the same story of the coloured glasses before the eyes. An academician, he wants a Ph.D. as his Master. But the precise and the very obvious lesson that our Master has taught us was that He was nothing. Up from nothingness He came, into nothingness He went, and during His life, he manifested that nothingness. You could not say of Him that he was educated, you could not say that He was a fool. He was not rich; He was not poor; He was never sick; He was never healthy. He was on that knife-edge of balance between the two extremes, what they call the 'golden mean', but which I call the 'suffering mean' because at that mean it is all suffering. Like a tight-rope-walker, He was ever on the balance. He cannot afford to swing this way, He cannot afford to swing that way. Go over a little towards poverty and the blessedness, the so-called blessedness of poverty, of renunciation, of suffering, the mortificatory ways of a ritualistic sadhana, put on a 'koupeenam' (loin cloth) go with a begging bowl, sleep on a bed of nails, chant 'Aham Brahmasmi' — this attracts us. You go to the other side, swing a little, you see the air-conditioned bungalow, the powerful cars, the radios, the television sets, the transistors, what have you ..... that attracts us. Then you are told Janaka was a Raja Rishi who was a king, who had his wives, and what not.

And we say, why shouldn't I also be a Rishi like that, with a palace, with beautiful wives, with horses, palanquins. The greatest temptation is for the Masters. It is not for fun that we hear in all the 'charitras' (in the history) of the great ones that they had moments of temptation; that Christ was tempted on the mount by Satan, that Nachiketa was tempted by Yama. You see, it is a test. "Are you what you claim to be?" Well, in Sahaj Marg, we have this peculiar phenomenon that there are no tests. That was after all what my Master told me. He said "In Sahaj Marg there is no test because the Ultimate is not a fool to have to test its raw materials. It knows what you are when you come here. Where is the need to test you?" But yet we find there are situations in our life, when we feel we are tested, when we feel we are being pushed through the mill, as one man put it recently, and the secret is as some of our speakers this morning have pointed out ... we ask for things !

Now do we make mistakes in asking for things ? I don't know. I wouldn't dare to say that we are making mistakes. But if you think again, you see, I am trying to pinpoint the lies we have been telling, the ones I have come across during the last 20 years of my association. I don't know how many years you have been associated with the Master - on one side we say He is 'Sarvagnya', 'Sarvavyapi', 'Sarvasva', He is all-knowing, this, that, X, Y, Z. On the other side we have the temerity, we have the cheek, we have the impudence, we have gone to manifest our disbelief in all those qualities, by saying 'Master, I lack food, I lack clothing, my daughter is to be married, will you permit me to pass the examinations ...' and some have gone to the extent of writing their roll numbers to Him — 'my roll number is 999'. So, my dear brothers and sisters, are you aware of what you are doing ? Are you

aware of what you are speaking ? Are you aware of what you are thinking ? You have to come back to the Vedic exhortation which is printed in every one of our patrika issues also ... 'Uthishta, Jagrata, prapya varannibhodhatha.' Whether we be the merest tyro, or we be the highest advanced, we are still to learn what is the truth of Sahaj Marg, what is the truth of the Master. We are Ph.Ds. in various disciplines, we consider ourselves truthful, moral; but what is most needed is this basic humility of approaching my Master with the truth of what He is, and accepting Him as such. I consider this to be a manifestation of every abhyasi's ego, that we were not satisfied with Babuji as we found Him, and in trying to satisfy our own ego that our Master should be like this, or our Master should be like that, we created a fantasy of a Guru, which fantastic or fantasy-ridden personality we are trying to put up on the Master and say 'He is this, He is that' and we want to perpetuate that fantasy now. And now it is even more easy because the coming generations have no idea of what Babuji was, leave alone what Lalaji was. None of us here, I make bold to say, has ever seen Lalaji. Some of us here may not have even seen Babuji; I am sorry for their unfortunate condition. This Divine personality was here, He breathed among us, He lived amongst us, He suffered amongst us, ... and alas some few of us were not able to see Him.

Now what I want you to do, is to think "does it mean that the coming generations of humanity are damned or condemned ?" To the contrary, we have the divine promises of my Master who said that this system will be the sole system in the world. When ? In the coming 10 years; that was one promise. The second promise was, it shall last for thousands of years. The third promise, a saint never dies, He knows no death. Fourth : His oft-

repeated words, that "Lalaji is with me, I am with Him, we are one." You must use your wonted, much wonted, much flaunted, much shown-off intelligence in going to the core of things, not in superficial triviality, like the form, name, etc. Either my Master is a truth-sayer or He is a liar. There cannot be a medium path. And if Sahaj Marg is going to last, well then Sahaj Marg is a way. You know, it is like the national Highway, from Kanyakumari to Delhi, say National Highway No. 7, the way is there always. The road is resurfaced, sometimes the bridges have to be re-built, but can you say the road has changed ? It is a marga. There is the marga, there is the 'marga-darshaka'; there is one who treads on that — the 'Musafir'. The Musafir is ever changing. You are but only a traveller on the path; well, there are thousands going ahead of you, there are thousands going to follow you; but the road is the same, whether you go on it today or you go on it tomorrow; Sahaj Marg will not change. So I won't like to say too much about this question, because it can be twisted, interpreted in various ways. But you know, we have to use our sense.

There is a principle; there is at the same time the thing that the principle represents. If I say give me gold, you can give me a necklace, you can give me a coin, you can give me a ring, you can give me a lump without form. If I say give me a necklace, you can give it to me in metal, you can give it to me in plastic, you can give it to me in anything. If I say give me a golden necklace, there are two specifications now. It shall be of gold and it shall be also a necklace. If I say give me a gold necklace, worth 1,75,000 rupees — now it has to have a value fixed to it. But, the world of name and form — this concept, this bondage has prevented us from seeing the Master when He was amongst us. I make bold to say that those who have not

seen the essence of Babuji when He was here with us physically, may per chance have a better chance of knowing Him today without that barrier of His body. His body was divine, it was adorable, it was beautiful beyond compare, but yet, it was a barrier. I say this because from the day that Master fell sick and He was unconscious, it has been the universal experience of the abhyasis all over the world that the sittings were most powerful, that the transmission was more persistent and people felt His presence, even those who have never felt His presence before. The simple explanation is when He was alive at Shahjahanpur our minds automatically located Him at Shahjahanpur and created a distance between Him and ourselves.

Now there is, as the mathematicians say, no locus; we have to locate Him. His presence is felt, and it is not anything new that His presence is manifesting itself today. It was there always. I make bold to say it was there even before He was born. But the birth of such great people is precisely to say, "my dear friend, I come so that you can use me as a point on which to fix, learn to love me, learn to cherish me, learn to believe in me, learn to have faith in me, learn ultimately to surrender to me, so that the connection between us will be internal and then you don't need the name, the form. I may manifest myself in another form, I may not; the connection is yours." So in denying this possibility, we not only deny the principles of Sahaj Marg, we deny the entire Hindu heritage ... "Yada yada hi dharmasya glanir bhavati ... " becomes a lie, because Krishna says very very emphatically that He taught this yoga to Manu long ago you see, and to many people before that ... "Arjuna, you don't know but I know all my lives of the past, and the lives of the future also. You are bound by time, you are bound by form, you are bound by name." And when Krishna was gracious enough to show

Himself in His Viswaroopa Darsana, and Arjuna, you know, had nothing but fear as a response. He says, "please come back to your form which I love so much." Now, I pray that no abhyasi of Sahaj Marg should be such a fool, excuse me for using that word, that my Master will one day manifest Himself in His Ultimacy and we should cringe and cower before Him and say, "Lord, please push back to your normal form, let me see you as you are." He will say, "Fool, is it for this you come to me ? I came to you in a form which you could touch, smell, love, to teach you how to love me in my true essence, as one day I hoped that I shall manifest myself to you."

"It was for a preparation and you want me to ever remain a child because you could not love me as an adult. As you could not love me as God Himself, should I be a child ? ..." This is Balakrishna Worship. We can't stand Him as an adult God and we can't stand Him as a Viswaroopi, we can't stand Him as a Yuga Purusha. Why? Because if He comes crawling, mouthing silly nonsense, you want to hug Him and cuddle Him and kiss Him, but in His ultimate form we have to cringe before Him, we don't know what we are, and we are ashamed, we are sin-ridden, we are ridden with the guilt of ages and ages of life. There again we are denying Him, because in one form, we think, He cannot do anything to us, He cannot punish us, He cannot correct us, He is after all Balakrishna ... lovable, soft, tender, but when He comes as God we are afraid of Him. So what do we really want ? Are we in abhyas for Reality or are we in abhyas to think soft things to cuddle with ? We are not Teddy Bears !

So let us make very sure, brothers and sisters — all of you, the learned, the literate, the highly educated — it is time, you see that education is only a veneer. The basic intelligence of all is guaranteed. God does not play tricks

with human beings. He has given us pancha indriyas. The sensitivity may be lacking. That is because we have put on coloured glasses. Remove them, which is being done for you every day by our devoted Preceptors, who are giving you the cleaning again and again, which we destroy — the effects of which we destroy by taking the glasses again and putting them on.

All this talk of Prarabdha, Sanchita, it is all you know, so much trivial, trash to be consigned to the waste paper basket. I have the Divine at my service, and I make bold to say that He is there, and He says "With a glance Lalaji could have transformed and could have liberated, it required but a glance from His eyes." These are the words which Babuji used. I have known Babuji doing it Himself too. So when you come to this aspect and we still keep harping on samskaras, and tendencies, and intelligence and lack of it, I am only sorry to say that we are now not only carrying the burdens of our education, the burdens of our wealth, the burdens of our culture, but we have, in some intangible way become proud of them.

So let us shake off the pride first, so that we may get rid of the burdens, because only then shall we see them as bondages to our understanding, as limitations to our understanding; because we see a Biologist talks of God in the biological way, a Scientist talks in the way of science, an Artist takes pictures of Him. What is it that is the reality behind all these ?

I remember Dr. Varadachari once said, the sloka "Sarva dharmaan parityajya" should be read as 'sarva adharmaan parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja.' And what are the adharmas ? The basic adharma is on one side we pretend to love God, to have faith in Him, to have surrendered to Him, when with every breath of our

existence we are only showing that we love ourselves, have faith in ourselves, and surrender only to ourselves ! This thing, we have got to shake off. We have got to, as Master said "Change your vision from here to here and God is there before you." These three things which we are capable of doing to ourselves, let us just take them out and invert them towards Him, and the goal is achieved. So the moral of all that I have got to say is, clear your vision before you try to clear others' vision. Remove the glasses from your eyes before you want to remove them from other people's eyes. Correct your wisdom; make sure it functions properly notwithstanding the degrees that are appended to your names before you have the cheek, the temerity and the courage to interfere with another man's understanding and his intelligence. And then the victory is won; we shall all travel together on this path. Let us not worry who is the Master, who is the Guide, who is the Goal; our hearts know it. And as Babuji ever said, — His clarion call to humanity I would say, His most valid advice, His most important advice through ages — "When in doubt, consult your heart."

So I would say, brothers and sisters, the time is before you to consult your heart and having wasted so much time let us not waste further time but make sure we go towards Him, who is ever with us, who is not only in front of us or behind us, and the Vedas say that He is all around us, and He is inside too ! We don't have to seek Him anywhere. So let us refer to Him in our hearts, forsaking this idea, forsaking this weakness, forsaking this despondency, that He has left and gone, that we are left bereft of guidance, of assistance, of help. I am often fond of saying that ... there is a song ... devotional song in Hindi ... Andhe ki lakdi tu hai ... he calls Him the walking-stick of the blind man ... Surdas I think, but I am not sure. But why the need for a

walking-stick ? If the blind man has such transcendental confidence in the Divinity, whom he is addressing that "you are the walking-stick in the hands of the blind", he should throw away the stick and walk. Let us not have the walking-stick; these are props to misunderstanding, to self-deception, to misery. Let us throw away all props, props of wealth, props of intelligence, props of understanding, props of even Sadhana. Because you know I once had the impudence to question the effect, the need for and efficacy of the Sahaj Marg system. Babuji said, "What do you mean ?" I said, 'Babuji, I am convinced these are unnecessary things.' He said, 'Why ?' I said, "you are yourself quoting to me often the Vedic precept '*emevaisha vrunute tena labhyaha*', — 'whatever you may do, however well you may do it, with whatever great degree of devotion you may do it, until He wishes, you cannot achieve it.' This is a fact. This is the truth. If this be so what is the fun in wasting my time upon Sadhana ?" He said, "What would you do ?" I said, "Leave that to me. After all the victor knows how he is going to conquer. Why should he tell the secret in advance ?" Then He smiled. At that time, I had in mind the story of Sahadeva who went to Lord Krishna before the Mahabharata Yuddha was to begin, and he said, "Lord Krishna, you are the culprit behind this whole nonsense. You are going to destroy the Kauravas and Pandavas and I am going to stop it. If you don't stop it, I am going to stop it." Krishna of course became for a moment, non-plussed. He told Sahadeva arrogantly "You ... stop me ? Do you know who I am ? Do you know my plans are already laid ?" Sahadeva said, "Yes, Lord. But I can nevertheless stop." Krishna asked "Sahadeva, how would you do it ?" Sahadeva said, "Lord, I meditate upon you, put you in my heart and bind you up. You cannot move

your little finger even !" Krishna came to his senses. You see that was the power of the lover, you know, of the true sadhak. Krishna pleaded "Sahadeva, please, you will spoil my entire plan, Nature's plan will be spoiled. Don't do this for my sake." Sahadeva said, "What will you do for my sake ?" Krishna replied, "Anything you ask"; and he asked "The Pandavas and Draupadi should come out of this war unharmed." Krishna agreed. Sahadeva went home. See, this is the power of love ! Enthrone Him in your heart, enshrine Him there, pray to Him silently. Let us not eulogise in public. I am ashamed to hear so many things of Master from so many insincere lips, pardon me for using harsh words. I made bold to say on one occasion where I was garlanded — I said, "every garland that you put on the neck of a man without affection, for him, it is like the noose of the hangman." It is a bondage. What makes such bondages acceptable is the love behind it.

So I would rather, a man call the Master a fool, with love, than praise Him with insincerity. The time for insincerity has long passed. Let us not insult that poor old man even after His physical end has come. Because He is ever with us. Let me assure you, He knows precisely what we are doing, what we are seeing, what we are speaking, even now at this moment. And I am sure He is smiling along (pointing towards the heart). So let us not insult Him, insult His divinity, insult His magnificent generosity by continuing to tell lies about Him, about His work. We have a right to speak only of that which we know, no more no less.

So, with this humble request to all of you, I thank you for listening to me. Thank you.

9

INTERIORIZE HIM

I am really happy to participate on such auspicious occasions. It is neither a duty for me nor a privilege for me. It is something that I have to do, so I do it. But I am nevertheless grateful to you for calling me and permitting me to be here with you all. Because it is the Master's work that we are doing and in which you are as much participating as I am. And in spiritual work you cannot say, this is only the Preceptor's work or only the abhyasi's work, it is all mutual co-operation. And if you ask who benefits, I would like to say that perhaps even God Himself benefits, because otherwise there is no point in His creating the world and creating human beings and then sending a Master to them. Because I consider in a way, that the creation that God made at the time of creation was something which is not complete. This may go against the theological arguments. But it was something He made and then sent human beings down to perfect it, because He had no mind.

So, all that the energies of God could do, when they came out of the first kshob was, to progressively solidify until there is the material creation. The way back had to be found, and for this the Guru comes, again an 'Amsa' of the Divine, but He is able to do what God could not do. God could send us down but a Guru has to take us up again, back to Himself.

I don't think people will consider this to be blasphemy because our own Shastras say the same thing ... *Guru*

Concluding talk at Tirupati on 30th December 1984.

Brahma Guru Vishnu ... all that sort of thing. And without the Guru,God cannot be achieved. This is one of the most crucial points of all the systems of practice in India; our whole life, our whole spiritual approach, our aspiration, is based on this fact that a Guru is necessary.

So when we honour the memory of such a great man, such a great personality, who founded this system for us at His personal level, brought it down for us, whatever may have been the mechanics of that, our heart beats with gratitude for Him, for His work, for the opportunity He has given us to go back to our original home as He called it, and in this expression of our gratitude, in the sharing of the Marga for our mutual benefit, because we are all proceeding towards the same goal; otherwise we wouldn't be here. This makes us co-passengers and it is our duty to mutually support each other, love each other, help each other, cherish each other, and in that activity of mutual trust, support, and love, there should be no conception of any differences of position or power or things like that.

A Preceptor is a person who is to serve the abhyasis. He has no other position. He has no other claims upon the abhyasis, what shall I say ..., respect, regard, even love. Because what the preceptor must get is the result for the work which the Master guarantees provided he does his work. Master has said time and again that when you do something right you cannot have a wrong result. That is against the Laws of Nature. So right action must be followed by right results; right action must be preceded by right thought; right thought must result in right endeavours to the proper orientation of the Goal and in such a person, with such powers, with a marga like this, which our Master has given us tailor-made — everything has been made for us — He has left the way for us, He has tailor-made the system for us, the literature exists for us,

the preceptors are there for our service. Therefore the word "failure" should be erased from the dictionary of spirituality, atleast as far as Sahaj Marg goes. The very idea of failure is repugnant. It cannot be, because it casts aspersions for the effectiveness of the way, the abilities of the Master and the effectiveness of the powers that He has used in creating these things for us.

So, any lack of faith is only a lack of faith in ourselves. We cannot by any means, by any stretch of imagination, have lack of faith in the Master. It only means we have no faith in ourselves; and essentially it is also the same spiritually, because when you say 'He is in my heart' and I don't believe in myself, I don't believe in Him too. So this is another aspect of the situation that I would like to place before you all, that whenever we doubt somebody else, we are really doubting ourselves. So let us make up our minds that, this way shall exist for ever. It is for the Master to promise; it is for us to make that promise come true. As every seed has within it the promise of life, of unfoldment of that life, of fruition of the possibilities contained in that seed, but yet if that seed is not planted, well watered and looked after until it is a tree and it can give fruit, the promise remains a mere promise. So I don't believe in some of the sententious statements that Master has said so and therefore it will be. Master has said so ... therefore it can be. The realisation of these possibilities, the actualisation of Master's promise to us, the achievement of the goals, of the levels of 'being' that He has outlined for us, is very much in our hands. Please don't misunderstand me as saying that there is something lacking in the Master's efforts.

We buy a packet of seeds from a shop, if you let it rot in the ground or if you keep it in your drawer of the table, it remains as mere seed. Somebody in the succeeding

generation might have the good fortune to find that packet of seeds and sow it and reap the harvest; it will not be us. If you ask why there have been gaps in the spiritual regeneration of mankind, in the spiritual advancement of mankind, my humble opinion is, it is precisely because the seeds of spiritual growth, the seeds of spiritual aspiration, the seeds of spiritual possibilities, have been left dormant until another agriculturist in the form of a Guru came and said, "Don't waste the seeds, they are for you. Sow them. This is how it is done. This is the first harvest. I have shown you what to do with it. Now continue the good work", and he goes back. And we lapse back into our old lethargy, to our old lack of faith and we say 'How can this tiny seed become such a big vriksha (tree)?', not having the faith, the patience, or lacking the efforts to put it in the ground and see whether it grows or not. That is all what we are expected to do. No man can claim that he creates agriculture. We are only sowing the seed and reaping the fruit. So I think it is with some sense that the word 'Krishi' has been used in yogic literature; 'Vyavasaya' has been used in Bhagvad Gita because it is very much an agricultural activity; you can say this is an activity of soul culture where the seed of divinisation sown into us by His grace, must find suitable soil, in the environment of our hearts, must be watered with our love, must be nurtured by our faith in Him, by our devotion in Him, until one day the seed has flowered into Him. The seed that was His seed becomes Him and then we find that He is occupying our entire self, not because we did anything wonderful. We allowed Him to sow the seed and saw to it that it was not destroyed. So abhyasa confers no distinction on us. We are not doing anything. All that we are doing is not to go against His wishes; not to oppose His will, not to place impediments to the work of His powers but to accept them passively, docilely, with faith, with love, that any

thing that He does for us is for our good. Because some of our speakers have said that we must ask, we must get. You see, when a child is born in the family, we think it is a good thing; this is traditional; big hallabulloo is made, cakes are bought, candles are bought, birthday party celebrated. Some years later we regret having had that child because we have no means to support it and it is running like a stray waif on the streets, adding one more goonda to the existing gangs of goondas. So what is good or what is bad, only the end can show. Beginning can never show. Cyclones come; trees are destroyed. Ten days later you find the City is much cleaner, all the dead-wood has been thrown out, all the rubbish has been cleared away. It was a necessary evil. To say that it was a necessary evil even, is wrong. It was something which we interpreted as evil, but which ultimately we found is good. So in the course of our existence we find things happen to us. Something is lost which we think is a loss. Something is gained which we think is a gain. Days after, weeks after, we find what we thought was a gain is really a loss, and what we thought was a loss is really a gain ! So time alone can tell us in what way, in what form a seed is going to grow and what it is going to become.

So, the fact that people whose lives are going on well, trouble-free, smooth, that they have faith in the Master, is something to be amused about, because there is no faith in it. They are not having faith in the Master. They are having satisfaction of the fact that their life is going smoothly according to their desire. I want a child, my child is born; I want my daughter to be married, she gets a good alliance. Some people go to the extent of buying lottery tickets, promising 20% of the profit to the Master, as if Master had to give me a lakh of Rupees to get a mere pittance of 20,000 Rupees for Himself. If He could give a

lakh of Rupees, He could surely get that Himself if He wants it. And this we see epitomised to the ultimate level of stupidity and perfection here (Tirupati) up in the Hills. And this is the Kshetra where financial corruption even to the god-hood has been perfected organisationally and in every other way.

So let us not indulge in these stupidities. When I get rich I am not getting rich, 'riches' come to me; when I am getting poor I am not becoming poor, my money is taken away from me. So it is like, you know, some thin people go on eating like anything and they cannot get fat; some fat people are dieting all their lives and they cannot lose half a kilo. So we are not in any way competent, not empowered, not capable of interfering in our own personal life. There is some force working which is outside our control, which knows what exactly has to become of me and under its guidance I must go on. Today I am fat, very good I am fat; tomorrow I am thin, very good I am thin. Today I have friends, excellent. Tomorrow I am hated and reviled, wonderful. It helps me to remember the Master even better. Because you will find in our Ten commandments of the Master, we are taught to accept all these things; miseries and all should be gifts of God; because when we are happy we never think of Him. Diwali comes, Pongal comes, Ugadi (New Year Day) comes, we only think of ourselves, our children, of the 'payasam' and 'vadai' (kinds of sweet and savoury) that we make, and of the stray friends who visit us; but let there be an illness in the family, God forbid — a death, then comes the thought of the Master. So without having to go to extremes there is a wisdom in God which makes Him keep us on the negative side of the situation; a little poverty, a little ill-health, a little misery. It is always good for us. Because it has several benefits; if a man is a little

below the optimum health levels, he doesn't do all the things that a healthy man does. That arrogance of the health, that pride in the health, that I can do anything and get away with it, he will not indulge. Indulgence is the word. When a man gets 99 Rupees where he needs 100 Rupees, he is careful with the money. Let him get Rupees 101/- and he is a debtor. So it is not for nothing that Master or Lalaji has outlined the three principles, the three very great requirements for a person to be a saint — permanent poverty, permanent illness, and permanent 'Ninda' (criticism). They have very great benefits in keeping us within our limits, within our limits of arrogance, within our limits of pride, within our limits of misuse of the body, the mind, the intellect, they endow us with humility, they endow us with sensible attitudes towards physical life, mental life, moral life and therefore they guide us through the channels into that path which can ultimately lead to perfection which Master calls 'the saintly path'.

So it is only a fool who will want happiness, and a bigger fool who will refuse miseries. The wise man always accepts. For him there is no distinction, because what comes from the lover is a love letter. It is not the contents of the letter which makes a love letter. When a lover writes a letter, it is a love letter. But we want it to start with, you know, XXX representing 20 kisses, and ending with 40 XXX's representing 40 kisses, with all the lies that a lover can tell his beloved in between.

We are happy with lies, with false promises and with flatteries. But when the Master writes and says "Dear Brother, I find your condition is a little less than what I expected, and I am praying for you", the first sentence annoys us, the second sentence shakes our faith. Because, we say, "Well, you know, my condition is good. He told

me last time. Now how He is writing like this. I don't know what is wrong with the Master." The second sentence where He says, "I am praying for your improvement", we say, "Well, Master Himself has to pray. What sort of a Master can He be?"

We should know that when a doctor operates surgically on us, it is not for satisfaction that he is giving us pain. It is to rid us of the disease, to cure us of the disease, to make us whole, well. If a mere doctor can be like that, how much more must be the Master? How much He must weep internally to move even the smallest thing against our wishes? But yet, it has to be done; because otherwise He would be going against the integrity of His own existence. So I can assure everyone of you that if the Master permits us as abhyasis, to undergo certain Samskaras which are painful, which are troublesome, which may demean us, which may make us lose those whom we love, whom we cherish, He weeps much more for us than we could ever weep for ourselves. But we don't see the tears in His eyes. We don't see, as we say in TAMIL putting of 'MUTTAKKU' over His head. So we think He is happy and He is testing us. It is not a test, because, as I told you this morning He needs to test nothing, He needs to test no one, least of all Himself. He knows His powers better than any one can know, because He is the Master of His powers. So let us believe that whatever happens to us is for our immediate good, for our ultimate good. There can be nothing which comes from the Master which is even capable of remotely being against our existence. If we are able to realise this, to understand it with our hearts, not the intellect, then the realisation of the commandments will come, that we will truly, not only accept miseries as gifts, we will pray for miseries. Because, then it opens up the possibility of our

progress being accelerated. Now we are co-operating. Acceptance is one thing, co-operation is another. So when do we really co-operate? I personally believe that some day somebody may have to formulate another set of commandments, where Master will not stop at saying "Accept miseries as gifts", but add "Pray for miseries as gifts." Because don't we do everything that will accelerate our progress in the material world? Should we not similarly do everything that is essential to accelerate our progress in the spiritual world? So this is the dawning of divine wisdom for which we have all to pray. We pray "Oh Master! Thou Art the Real Goal of Human Life" — but nobody knows who is the Master, nobody knows what is human life, nobody knows what is the Goal, leave alone the real Goal.

"Our wishes are putting bar to our advancement" — we are repeating it day-in and day-out and yet we wish for progress, we wish for this, we wish for that, everything is a wish.

"Thou art the only God and power to bring us up to that stage" — we deny Him when we question His powers, when we deny again His magnanimity, we deny His wisdom, and most of all we deny His right over us.

In today's law, a mere husband has so many rights over his wife. A father has so many rights over his son. An employer has so many rights over his employees. A mere passenger has rights over the transportation. And if you read in the newspapers, a tragedy which took place in Bhopal has attracted all the vultures of the West, American lawyers, who have suddenly become interested in the fate of these poor people of Bhopal and are filing suits on their behalf ... Where were they so long? Why this sudden interest in the people of Bhopal, in the Bhopal tragedy by these American lawyers? I am told that it is

because the suits are worth probably $ 100 billion and they will get 40% if they win it. But this is welcome as a sign of sudden awakening of interest towards the Indian community by the American community. This is the sort of mentality we have, not knowing that our interest lies not in importing foreign goods, not in importing foreign technicians but in helping ourselves. And this, only spirituality does. Because the Master by being first foreign to us, enters our hearts, becomes us in every sense of the word, and now we become self-dependent, self-reliant, self-growing, self-evolving systems. The Master from outside is guiding us, helping us, enabling us to realise that He is within us, so that we co-operate with 'this' rather than with 'that'. Because as I said somewhere else once, the external Master will disappear someday. The physical form will go. Then if you are dependent on that physical form, your spiritual journey stops there.

So the whole secret of yoga, is in bringing that Master — His subtle essence, His spiritual self, which He is putting into us in every transmission — into our heart, accepting it in the heart, making it grow there, so that when He leaves the physical self, He is still here for eternity with us, wherever He may be, however He may be, in whatever situation He may be.

So, the only possibility of eternal guidance, eternal help, eternal support, is from within, not from the external world, not even from the Master of the external world. If we don't permit Him to come into our heart and interiorize Himself, we may as well never have had a Master. So this is why we meditate on the heart and we do this cleaning and so many things which Dr. Kuppuswamy also explained: When we invite the Master, naturally we want the place to be cleaned. So that is only an aspect, it is an aspect of etiquette, more than anything else, that the

place should be cleaned when a great man comes. When Ministers visit Tirupati, the streets are cleaned up. It is not for the public good. It is not a sudden awakening of the need for public health or the consciousness of the welfare of the people of Tirupati that enters into the Minister's mind. It is the minions who wish to show a good Tirupati before the Minister whose constituency it is. We do the same, recognising that He is the Master of this constituency. He is not elected. It is His, by right of creation. He has created it, it is His. We did not create our hearts, we did not create even our bodies. So, we are only respectfully, lovingly, humbly handing over something to its creator which foolishly, arrogantly, pridefully, we had accepted as ours; we had imagined it to be ours. Now we say, "Lord, take it, it is yours, do what you will with it." This symbolises what the spiritual life is. This is all that surrender means. I had this tape recorder to look after for him. To me it was a burden; because I was responsible. Because when it didn't work, I was upset. Why? Because somebody has kept something with me and I am responsible for its right protection, right preservation, right functioning. So we are answerable to Him for the right performance of this organisation, for its right and effective functioning, for its right movement towards Him and one day when He comes and says,

"Render unto me thy account."
You say, 'Here it is. You look for yourself.'
"What is it you have done with it?"
'I don't know.'
"Why did you do it?"

'That too, I don't know. But such as it is I render unto you. Now Lord, take thine.'

So, this is all that is surrender. People imagine that they are giving themselves up and that they are going to

lose their identities. This idea is very common in the West that we will lose our individuality. What is your individuality? Who said you have any individuality? Just because you have a name and a form, you think you are an individual. So is a grain of rice, if you could give a name to it or number to it. There is nothing which distinguishes the human individual from an animal or from a grain of sand. In fact, there are millions more, many billions more, grains of sand than there ever will be human beings on this planet. So this is one aspect of the arrogance, the ego, the pride which says, "I am so and so. How can I surrender and give up my existence?" It never was yours! It was a momentary aberration of your emotions, of your intellect, that you thought you are something separate, you are always of Me as a piece of property. Today you have to account for it, give it back.

Whenever we die, this is what is going to happen to our bodies. We cannot carry it with us. Happily or regretfully, healthfully or sick, this body has to be surrendered to this planet. It belongs to this planet because it is constituted of five bhutas, as we call them and there it belongs. So whatever has come, from wherever it has come, to that it returns. That which is eternal, goes back to that which is eternal, in whose custody it belongs, who created it, to whom it must inevitably return, whether we like it or not. So, whenever we strive to express our own wishes, our own will, our own desire, and to manifest what we call our individuality, our independence, our right of action, we are going against the will of Nature and therefore we can never succeed. Therefore, such a man's life is full of miseries, full of disaffections, full of troubles, illnesses, losses, calamities, and he says, "If God is all merciful, why does He penalise me like this?" It is not God who is penalising you. You

have turned your face away from the Sun and you see nothing but the shadows in front. And you are afraid of your own shadow. Turn towards the Sun and the shadow is left behind, the darkness is left behind.

I had one thought a few days back during meditation, which I exchanged with some of my friends, that we see light and shade, light and darkness, because we are rotating. Sometimes we are facing the Sun, sometimes we are against the Sun. But what does the Sun see? It sees changing face of the same planets around it. It doesn't see light and darkness. One moment it is seeing Africa, then it is seeing Asia, then it is seeing Europe, and it goes on. So you see, depending upon where you are looking from, you see different things. If you look from the aspects of the self, everything is a tragedy. If you look from the aspect of the higher 'Self', everything is growing, every thing is going unto Him. It is a progressively evolutionary path. For him there is no misery, he is ever smiling. And He says, "Yes, you are coming, whether you are falling a few feet or not. You are still rising to me because that is inevitable." So in giving up our desires, in giving up our foolish wishes, prejudices and things like that, we are only going up without impediments which we create ourselves. So spirituality has to be understood in very fundamental terms, that I am spiritual whether I like it or not. There is no such thing as progress; there is only a returning to the starting point from where I set out. I still remain what I am. In His mercy if He says, "My son, you are divine even if you set out," that is His Grace. But if I am a son, whether I am a fool or a wise man, whether I am rich or poor, whether I am sick or healthy, if I go back, He has to take me back. Because I am no less His than He is mine, once that relationship is there.

So it is only the foolish human mind which says, "Sir, I am unfit. How can I come to you unclean?" Clean or dirty or whatever it is, 'go back'. You know, when a child comes out of the street, having played all day, stinking, filthy, mother doesn't shout at it. On the contrary the dirtier it is, the more she hugs it, quickly bathes it, quickly changes its clothes; that is her function. So to keep us clean, to keep us strong, to keep us healthy, to keep us wise, as befitting His children, that is His business, so long as we are in His domain, which is our home. When we are outside we have to look after ourselves. When we are in the house, He looks after us. So let us make sure that He looks after us in every possible way by getting back to where we belong, becoming His charge rather than being independent and having this big tragedy of having to look after ourselves and our problems.

10

DISCIPLINE

One way of problem solving, or rather the only way of problem solving, is to first recognise that the problem exists. In our sanstha we are too prone to think that we are already saints, that everything is as it should be and that the brotherhood which exists, if at all it exists, need exist only in a small closed circle like at this moment as it is here.

I have often commented on this even at Basant Utsav, that during those three or four days the 2000, 3000, 4000 abhyasis live very amicably, very harmoniously; we meet each other, respect each other. But on the 5th morning when the Utsav is over, indiscipline starts even while boarding the bus for departure. People rush in for the front seat, people rush in to put their beds and feverishly position their luggage, so that they can take them out easily at the railway station; people rush into the train and occupy even the reserved seats and then quarrel with others, I mean among our own brothers and sisters. And then on top of all this indiscipline, the people who are not disciplined, will themselves comment "What is this brotherhood that we talk of, if 27 people who have reserved seats cannot adjust or accommodate 22 of us who have the misfortune of not having reservations?" They conveniently forget that the railway rules require that the reserved seats should be occupied by only those who have reserved the seats. They further forget that we have no rights to distribute the seats among ourselves. Reservations are not transferable. They forget that the

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Talk at Chittoor on 31st December 1984.

poor fellows had made the reservations perhaps 30 days or 40 days in advance, only so that they could travel back in comfort. And all this they expect, at the cost of the comfort of those who had made advance reservations, who had foresight to do so and who are now being blamed for lack of brotherhood, that one-for-one adjustment was not made. And then they suddenly turn round and see the General Secretary sitting in another seat and they start blushing, even then not because of shame but because of their being caught.

This has happened so many times. I am ashamed to say that once, after a Basant Celebration, after 3 days stay at Ashram, Babuji was going back home in a Rickshaw, instead of in a Car, and there were 30 or 40 abhyasis going on the road. They looked up, saw Babuji, they didn't even care to stop or even respectfully bow before Him or fold their hands, not even this; they pretended not to have noticed Him and turned away. I commented to Master, "This is the sort of discipline we seem to have brought about in the Mission that even when you are going on the street when you are outside the Ashram, they believe as if your mastery, your high position, spiritual authority, your elevation in Spiritual realm, everything is left behind in your cottage and here you are only Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur." This is nothing new. In fact we have to talk about discipline in the East, in the West, in the North and in the South. It is very painful that even in the smallest of our behaviour pattern, inter personal relationship, we have not been able to change ourselves, regulate our behaviour, conduct ourselves as we should. I have had occasion to discuss this with Master, particularly when we were in Europe, where you know people don't mind what we talk — I am left in total freedom with the Master. I asked Him once, "You take

Christianity. That religion is known for brotherhood, for compassion. It is not hypocritical, it is not something which is just a veneer or polish on the outside, it exists. You can see it in the way the fathers, the lay-brothers, the church people, behave. You see it in the Buddhists, you see it everywhere, where you say there is no inner spiritual development. You see it in the Muslim brotherhood, how they exuberantly meet each other, how they respect the Kazi, how they are prepared to sacrifice their lives if it is needed, how they respect the calls of prayer at the appropriate time, how they are disciplined. Have you seen the photographs of Mecca during the Haj — line by line there are hundreds of thousands of muslims sitting, and when they bow, it is like one wave of that. Whereas in our Sanstha, Satsangh at 6.30 means arrivals will go on till 7.

We used to have an abhyasi in Madras. On Sunday morning we have generally satsangh from 7.30 am to 8.00/8.20. He was invariably coming in when we just say "That's all." There was not one Sunday on which he was present when we sat for Satsangh and the explanation for late-coming was always the same, that his driver had not come. So you see there seems to be something basically wrong. I had prolonged arguments with Babuji, "Is there any law of Nature that Spiritual inner development should not be balanced by the external behaviour also, modifications of the external behaviour also? Does some sense of balance in Nature require that the inner development should be at the cost of external factors ?" He said, "It cannot be. On the contrary, both must go side by side." I said, "Show me one example?" I really meant it because I am yet to see one example from the highest to the lowest, where the inner and the outer are matched. If there is one example it is only the Master Himself, because He was ever courteous, He was ever loving. He

was prepared to give up His sweater during the cold seasons to other persons who did not bring them. He was prepared to give up His chair to somebody who had back trouble, He was prepared to go to the bathroom when everybody else had gone, eat after everybody else had eaten. And all that example we had before us, the living example — we admired, we talked about, we wrote about but I am sorry to say nobody tried to emulate Him. Have we not seen Master picking up bits of paper from the grass in Shahjahanpur and every time he bent down, people used to adore Him "What a wonderful Master that He is Himself stooping to pick up bits of paper from the grass !" And the man who is ready to throw away the empty cigarette packet is right there, so that on the next round Master could come and pick it up. So this was something, you know, which was very scandalising in Sahaj Marg. It is not just something to be ashamed of, it is scandalising. It is so bad that sometimes — you will forgive my saying it — I have questioned the efficacy of our system itself. The inner I am not able to judge. My Master said, "He is elevated. He is in the fifth ring, you are in the third ring." That as a Master it is His privilege to commend and we accepted it. But the external we are all seeing. And where is that individual today in Sahaj Marg? Produce him before me. I wish to see one person whether it is in India or outside India. I am still more sorry to say that the persons who Babuji said, are the first examples of spiritualisation outside India, ever in the history of spirituality — their behaviour is no better. So it is not restricted only to Indians. The very spiritual development that Master gives us seems in some way to tarnish our external, our conduct, our sense of responsibility, and I am still not able to understand why this is so. I am sorry to say that this was not pointed out to me yesterday. I would

have set it as a research task to our academic brothers in Tirupati. I don't know if any of them are here. But this is something that we should think about and do research about. Why on earth is it possible that mountains can be moved in our inner self and a simple mole cannot be eradicated from your face? I am talking figuratively, you see.

So how to suggest ways, how to answer brother Ramamurthi's question? I really don't know, except perhaps to suggest that the very fact of spiritual development seems to confer on us certain ideas, certain assumed rights, almost like divine rights that 'a spiritual individual need not conform to a behaviour pattern,' that 'a spiritually elevated soul is evolved above right and wrong,' that 'a spiritually evolved person is above all moral codes'. And unfortunately in the Hindu tradition we have before us very very bitter, sad, annoying examples of many of the Sanyasis, the most mischievous crowd in religious history, fellows who are fanatics, who live off the land, who cheat, who are prepared to do murder and rape if necessary — and they have been the objects of our veneration. So in some way I think the Hindu mind has been conditioned to accept misbehaviour, immorality, lying, cheating etc. in so-called religious persons. This has gone to such an extent in our blood that we find in every cinema a sanyasin appears, there is a fellow who is mouna Swami, who is silent and robed and dressed in yellow, who claims everything; he goes to a rich man; apple, gold, silver, everything is brought to him — and in the night he just walks off with it; it is horrible.

This is the state of affairs perhaps, to which we have been conditioned and this condition can be a very valid reason why in India we behave like this, why in India we

associate bad behaviour with so-called religious uplift. But how can one account for such a thing in Europe, where the external training, the training in ethics, the training in morality, has been deeply grounded (particularly in the christian tradition) and where one hopes that the inner transformation will not interfere with the external transformation which is achieved so very easily. In Hinduism, Yes; it has been corrupt inside, so it has been corrupt outside, all through the religious history of India. I have often remarked with very considerable sorrow that the most faithful feature of the Indian life is this "Satyam vada, dharmam chara", in the Vedas, which is a clear indication that we have been a nation of liars from the days of Vedas. And in modern life, you find "Don't spit", "Don't Damage Public Property", "Be Indian", "Buy Indian", you know, exhortations ... "To be Indian", "To be Moral", "To tender the Correct Fare", "Don't Travel without Tickets" ... But this is a matter for us to feel ashamed, when overseas visitors who come to India see this at the airport itself. What they think of us, I don't know, I would not like to know, because what I would think of India if I were to come from outside and saw all these, I know very well in my heart.

So, morality, correct behaviour, ethical behaviour, a certain integrity to your beliefs, integrity to traditions, practising what you preach — these have never been the character of Indian life, factors of Indian life, features of Indian life. If I read my books correctly, the Indian tradition, the Hindu tradition, the Hindu culture — the more these exhortations have appeared the more we can read into it a decline steadily from the past and if 10,000 years ago my fore-fathers had to be told to tell the truth and to avoid immorality, this-that-and the other, I don't know if ever in the history of India there was a time when

we were moral, when we were ethical, and this perhaps explains why the Indian is not quite liked abroad. Because we are masters of preaching and masters of not practising what we preach. Our preaching is all for others. We shout from the roof tops. You know, in international relationships, our Foreign Ministers are experts at this job. If somebody explodes an atom bomb we are the first to protest, but we have every right to do it ourselves. If somebody is practising racism in South Africa we protest, but in India there is no less of it.

So in our private life, in our public life, in our religious life, there had never been in the history of India an effort to match principles and beliefs with practices and behaviour. So when our Brother asked me for a solution to this problem, I can only very humbly bow before him and say, "Brother this has been a problem for my Master even."

In spite of His divine example, personal example present before us, His activities before us, behaviour before us, His gentleness, His compassion, His ever smiling cheerfulness, His loyalty to His Master, His loyalty to every single spoken word of Lalaji Maharaj, His immediate acceptance of orders, His implicit and total obedience — we had not been able to follow one millionth of one percent of that example. Which abhyasi can say with his hand on his heart, 'I obeyed Master' ? Master says "You are snoring when you are meditating." The man asks 'Why ?' Master says, "Eat one roti less" and the man says "it is a joke." Probably he ate one more to compensate for that disappointment. So we cannot obey, you know. We can glaringly see before us : (1) We never accepted the Master. (2) We never accepted His teachings. (3) We never tried to put them into practice. (4) We have no intention of putting them into practice because they

interfere with our freedom of choice, of action, which we believe to be our divine right. So, I don't see any way by which the Indian is going to be transformed. This is not a Sahaj Marg problem. This is an Indian problem — corruption in private life, corruption in public life, corruption in every sphere of activity. Perhaps we exported it also, because 20 years back, it was not so rampant in the West and the Far East. This is a new phenomenon that in Europe there is so much corruption, in Japan there is so much corruption. Today wherever you see, there is corruption. I see like our language, like our art, like our tradition, we exported our corruption too during the last quarter of a century or half a century. So, how we are going to correct ? Well, it is for each individual to make up his mind 'If I don't correct myself I am inviting calamity on myself'. If India is a poor country, if India is an under-developed country with all its vast potential of men and materials, with its immense richness of heritage, with its immense spiritual traditions and background, it is because we choose to be beggars, we choose to be liars, we choose to be cheats, as there lies a little petty money. It is so easy to cheat your neighbour and take twenty Rupees from him. It is easy to tell somebody a lie and make Two hundred Rupees. It is easy to sell your Nation and make one million dollars.

So, we are talking today of materialism and material culture corrupting our influences, corrupting our values, corrupting our very life itself and corroding it to the core. Some of our leaders have been very happy about talking of curruption, forgetting that everything flows from the top, the river flows from the top, Grace flows from the top, corruption also comes from the top. It is not a grass-root phenomenon ! The more the people in the top want to make money, the more the people in the bottom have to

make money, to pay to those who are at the top. Where will they pay it from ? So you see, this is something so widespread that we have to perhaps only pray for it, but even prayer does not seem to work today, because in prayer also we are corrupt. We are not able to pray. You know it is said in the Christian Tradition that the ultimate point of despair, the ultimate point of denigration of the individual, the ultimate depth of his fall, is when the human soul cannot even pray, it is not when we are sick, it is not when we are unable to eat. That moment of utter despair from which perhaps no redemption is possible is the moment when a man finds or a woman finds, that even prayer becomes impossible. I don't know how many of us are still able to pray faithfully with prayerful heart, with devotion, with belief in what we are praying, to whom we are praying. It has become another mumble jumble ritualism, like so many of our mantras in the Hindu Brahmin tradition.

We say our prayer, "Oh Master, Thou Art the Real Goal of Human life." What is the next sentence ? Ah, yes, "we are yet but slaves of wishes." Sometimes I am even tempted to think that the repetition of the prayer itself perhaps reimposes in us our slavery to wishes, by our repeating the line 'we are yet but slaves of wishes', 'we are yet but slaves of wishes'. I am afraid of saying this because some people might think that I have intentions of changing this prayer. I am accused of changing so many things. But there is a psychological theory which says that the more you repeat a thing, the more you tend to become that. 'I am a pig, I am a pig, I am a pig' — then I become a pig. So, there is a certain psychological benefit in thinking we are already that which we should become and trying to make our way towards it. But there is also certain insanity attached to the way in which we are behaving, in believing

we are that which we have to become, and therefore we can act as we choose.

In our country, this is the example set by the religious heads, by the political heads, by the heads of institutions, by the leaders of the industries, by those with money, that they believe, and have always believed, that the right of office, the right of possession of wealth etc. become absolute rights and they can do as they like, 'the king can do no wrong'. But they do not remember that when they say that the king can do no wrong, it was an admonition that 'if you are a king, my dear friend, you can do no wrong; please behave'. Instead it has been interpreted to mean something very convenient for them that whatever they do, cannot be wrong. On the contrary it should mean 'you can do nothing except what is right'. It is unfortunate that even Master had to teach us that the freedom is only to do the right, the freedom to do the right alone is the freedom. There is no other freedom. Freedom to do a wrong thing doesn't exist. How can a man have freedom to do what is wrong? But today freedom is mixed up. The concept of freedom is totally misunderstood. East, West, North, South, wherever you go it is the same problem, that 'if I am free I can do what I like. I am a free individual. Have I no right to do what I feel ?' So instead of being a Sahaj Marg problem, instead of being a Hindu problem, instead of being an Indian problem, we see now it has achieved a global dimension.

Today, it is not so much a crisis of the mob or the crisis of the forthcoming — God forbid — third world war, as it is the crisis of character. And of course, the only satisfaction that people like me, who are unable to do any thing in this matter, can achieve is to say that 'Rome is not built in a day'. But yet, all theories of change suggest that the change must come at one instant instead of ten. One

doesn't progressively tell more and more truths : 'yesterday I told 99 lies, today I tell 98 lies, tomorrow I will tell 97 lies' — we don't become Masters of truth like that. The Master of truth is the man who turns from lie to truth at one instant, from immorality to morality at one instant. So how this change is going to be brought about, how this transformation of character (which is today the basic ingredient of our life, individual, total or public) is going to be brought about ? Forget spirituality. I would rather prefer, like Swami Vivekananda said, "Let us have men first, people who have morality, people who have integrity, people who have faith, let them not be spiritual at all." What we need is Men, who have faith, even if they haven't produced a single thing which is worthwhile.

Our Brother quoted Master who said, "Let us leave the world at least as we found it, if we can't better it." But the fundamental axiom or the fundamental advice should be "Let us not die worse than we came into this world." I may not be born a saint. But let me not die a worse sinner than what I was when I came into this world. Let me not go on the path of downward degradation, ever tending further downwards, in the fond hope that every curve has to reach a trough and then come up again. Some people have this mistaken belief, in a mechanical law that anything which goes downwards must come up, and anything which goes up must come down by itself. Well, any immaterial object, a thing which has no life, if you throw up, it will come down eventually. But that is only applicable to non-living matter. A living individual is supposed to condition his existence by his own volition and by his own will power using his intellect, judging what is good for himself, teaching and being taught, developing and helping others to develop, growing and helping others to grow. Instead of that, we are all now embracing

each other in a mutual drama of each one deceiving the other, each one corrupting the other, each one cutting the throat of the other.

In today's life, you will find those who are praised to the skies are those who have a lot of money amassed, the rich people. You know, no rich man ever pays for any thing he acquires. He goes into the best dance hall and he gets into the first row and the first row is always reserved for people like that; because his reservation is not got by paying Rs. 20/- for the seat but by buying a seat for eternity by giving a Rs. 2,000/- life donation. They are very clever people. You know, he says, "If I go 20 times a year to that seat it is a matter of Rs. 400/-, at Rs. 20/- a seat." Similarly in other sabhas; and he compounds all these and he says, "What is the principle involved, how much interest have I taken. Give that as donation. That interest will take care of all these things." You buy your power, you buy your way to your office, even in spirituality people had been seeking to buy their way into the heart of the Master. You all know it. Many have commented that rich people came into the Mission and spoilt it. They are not rich people but poor people. When I say poor people, I mean the poor rich fellows; they come really hoping that in some way Master will remove their burden of guilt, their burden of sorrows at all the ways they have used to acquire the wealth and in an endeavour to compensate for all that to mitigate the powers of evil they have created within themselves, they make a huge offering of cash donation. They didn't come with the intention of corrupting the institution or the Master. We also have on the other hand, the ordinary individual, who gives Rs. 2/- and he expects in return liberation, realisation. You know it is a peculiar invertendo that a man who gives a million dollars does not expect anything

from you except a pardon for the sins he has committed. Whereas the so-called good individual who thinks he is moral and who thinks he is ethical, goes and gives Rs. 2/- and expects to be liberated from all bondages. So I am really, you know, in a quandary as to the principles, because more than what my Master has given us, I don't think any human individual can codify or give rules for conduct; they are so simple to be followed. What more can be asked of the Master ? You know in tasteless food the only missing ingredient is often a pinch of salt; every thing has been prepared perfectly. Here, what is the missing ingredient ? Our willingness, our acceptance of the fact that we have to change. Transformation means total transformation. It doesn't mean only the inner transformation. This is a very convenient way of interpreting transformation, by saying that if the inside is transformed, it is good enough. The outside need not conform to it. Inside transformation benefits us. Outside transformation may perhaps not benefit us, which is a lurking fear in us. You see, we don't want to be straight, we don't want to be moral, we don't want to be above corruption, because we are afraid we may lose our income, we may lose our position in society. When Master has assured inner transformation, and in His benign grace He is prepared to forgive our sins of commission and omission, day after day, why on earth should I be moral ? Why on earth should I not be corrupt ? This is the question each man is asking himself and finds a very convenient answer in saying "Yes, my dear friend, go on. Babuji is ever forgiving." Therefore all these eulogising on the public platform... it is not you, who the speaker is trying to convince. He is trying to convince himself that the immense grace of the Master, His immense generosity, His immense forgivingness, will

apply to himself because he is speaking about Him in public — it is as though he says "Master, please listen to me. Don't forget me when the time comes to forgive me."

So you see, it is not that we are not aware of all the needs, the need to be straight, the need to be honest. It is not that we are not aware; it is that we hope that in some way our spiritual future having been assured, our next life having been blessed by Him, let us enjoy the fruits of this life to the fullest possible extent, and beg forgiveness from Him when we next go to Shahjahanpur. In some mysterious fashion, we have transported the Christian confessional — into Sahaj Marg where every Friday you know, the Catholic goes to the priest and separated by the barrier, he confesses and the Father says, "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, I absolve you." That is that. Let us no longer live in this fool's paradise. This is because now Babuji has become merged with Lalaji and Lalaji has been a total disciplinarian, who was bold enough to write that however high a man may have reached in spirituality, whatever elevation he may have achieved, even to the highest possible extent, if he was immoral, even the breath of spirituality has not touched him. That is the statement of the Grand Master. Today when Babuji is no longer in that beautiful, compassionate, soft form of His, when He has no longer the individuality, the individual right of action to forgive us — I dare say that sort of forgiveness has gone with 19th of April 1983. I personally don't expect that in any way He can now help us. Because His mind, as somebody said yesterday is now the total Divine mind.

If you will remember, often I have said that a Guru comes only so that He has a heart and He can have compassion towards us, He could be merciful towards us; He can say "Well, you are what you are, you cannot help it

and if you are still what you are, it is my fault." Babuji always used to say, "It is my fault that you are not being transformed; it is my fault that you are not grateful." In some way India has produced such giants — political people like Gandhi, who fasted for other people's errors and spiritual people like Vivekananda, our Master, who take the blame for all that happens in the universe upon themselves. But it should not be something over which we gloat, over which we rejoice and happily go our way thinking that they are doing this for us, why on earth should we do it for ourselves now. You will carry a baby in your hand till it is able to walk. When it is able to walk, if it insists on being carried, don't you spank it ? And Babuji has written to one Preceptor as long ago as 1958 that "it is my fault and I am to be blamed, that I did not have a stick in my hand. If I did not have a stick, it should at least have been a stick of flowers, so that you would have appreciated that I have something in my hand to punish with. Therefore your temper is in this state in which it is seen today." This was written in 1958. I have a copy of that letter. Even in 1968 Master appreciated the fact that without a stick in the hand, it is going to be very difficult to control this growing organisation. It was His immense mercy that He chose never to have a stick in His hand. But He perhaps didn't have it because we were children. But when we grow up, He expects us to develop a certain sense of responsibility to the organisation, to ourselves, to the Master. A child of three can take a ten rupee note and put it in the fire playfully, not knowing the difference between the ordinary paper and the currency note. But if a boy of 20 puts a ten rupee note into the chula, what will you do with him ? So Master expected of us that we would grow out of that childish innocence and become responsible adults to whom the Mission could be entrusted, to whom their personal spiritual growth could be entrusted, to

whom the transformation of the external self could be entrusted, because Babuji said, "The inner change I can bring about. The outer is your responsibility." He never undertook the responsibility for the outer change. He said, "Behaviour you have to correct; morals and ethics you have to develop. This is your work upon yourself; you know what to do. There is nothing difficult about it." Changing the inner, no body else can do; it needs a Master. If I expect my Master to come and shave my face every morning, is it right ? Oh ! He is all embracing, all loving, you know, He was prepared even to press the feet of Parthasarathi, why not shave him ? My Master would have done it if I had asked Him. I am sure of it because such was His nature. Such was the unbounded lowliness that He thrust upon Himself. He might have done that too. But is it right of us to ask that I should be taught to tell the truth, when I know how to tell the truth ? Have I to be taught to stay away from other man's goods and properties, when I know it is wrong and not proper ? These are not the things which we need to be taught. These are not the things in which we have to be trained. We all know how to do it. We still persist in not doing it because we have decided not to do it. So, today I have no doubt in proclaiming before you all that if we are indisciplined, it is not because of ignorance, it is out of wilfulness, out of wilful disregard for the principles and practices the Master has preached to us. I make bold to say that He left 25 years in advance of His own sake instead of in 2006 or 2007, perhaps because of utter disgust, at Himself, at His work, at the success of His work of what He has produced amongst ourselves, and said, "Well, let me take this course. If they have any sense, let them try to develop." So, when we are wilfully bound upon certain course of action, of thought, of speech, no

power on earth can change us because it is our will which is being applied. And in the Spiritual field the more we progress, the stronger our will becomes and therefore we have this very unfortunate phenomenon that as we are growing, we are becoming more indisciplined, because the will power is being ever strengthened in operating more in the direction of retrogradeness away from the principles and practices of Sahaj Marg. We are producing more and more indiscipline, more and more immorality, more and more of all these things. It is precisely because the will is being strengthened, our ideas are not being strengthened, our desire is not being strengthened in the right direction. So we are growing with this increased will power in the same way and I can only assert that if we don't change our direction and use the will to turn the direction itself in the right way, this organisation, the abhyasis of this organisation are becoming or rather going to become progressively more indisciplined. There is no doubt about it. Because it is after all the Master's work. It is another manifestation of His work that the good He did for us in developing our will power, is being turned against ourselves in indiscipline, in wrong activity and we are destroying ourselves.

So ultimately who is to blame ? It is the individual. The Master has no hand in this. The Master did every thing. It is like you give your knife to the son and he commits suicide. In Master's own family there was this example. He had a gun in His house and one of His sons committed suicide. So it is wrong to put instruments into hands of those people who have not been trained in the use of that instrument. But unfortunately in the Sahaj Marg system there never was and I presume there never will be, the corrective apparatus, because Master had immense faith that ultimately human beings will correct

themselves. Some wisdom will dawn and we should leave it to them to accept the teaching, to follow the teaching, to practise the teaching and make themselves what He wanted them to be. He never believed in corrective apparatus. He never believed in enforced discipline. So that is the inheritance that we have derived from Him that we have to continue this organisation without a corrective apparatus, without externally imposed disciplinary measures and yet pray that somehow we will all become what He wanted us to become. I can only entreat you on this occasion, to at least start praying for it, sincerely pray for it, so that, in the not very distant future, we shall be an organisation, we shall be an assembly of abhyasis, of whom we can be proud and say, well at least this is what Master wanted us to become, that we are seeing before our eyes.

Thank you.

11

CHANGE AND DISCIPLINE

It is said that "Out of chaos cometh forth order !"; in fact quite a few philosophies seem to believe that without chaos, there can be no order at all ! In the system of sadhana given to the world by my Master, Samarth Guru Mahatma Shri Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur, the need for chaos does not find any place. What does find a place in His system — the Sahaj Marg Philosophy, is the need for bringing about change : Change in the individual; in society; in customs and manners, and thus in life itself.

Where Nature brings about change, it has to resort to such means as are not considered necessary when a Master brings it about. Nature has to use means which may appear to us as being violent and destructive. A Master brings about global change by coaxing it, out of the human heart. It is only when coaxing fails that other means may have to be adopted, or resorted to.

How does a Master coax human beings ? He coaxes them by His Divine love, and by the offer of His unlimited services in their self-development to the highest possible level where they can become perfect human beings — which is only another way of saying that they have become divinised. This level of human development is what He offers us, in return for our co-operation. Co-operation in what ? It is precisely this question which we have to understand. Its import is so weighty that as Master used to tell me, the presence of this co-operation

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Message delivered on Basant Panchami Celebrations at Madras on 26th January 1985.

can light up the world, and make it a place of divine harmony, peace and love, so that human existence becomes one of bliss, whereas its absence, the lack of co-operation can condemn life on this world to levels worse than that of hell itself !

What does this really mean ? It means that when we accede to His wishes, and are willing to be coaxed by Him to fall in line with the scheme of self-development that He so lovingly offers us, we are really participating in a larger venture, the supreme magnitude of which we can scarcely begin to even imagine.

And what is this larger scheme in which He is interested ? It is nothing other than the bringing about of change : Change in individuals, then through them change in society, then in the world at large, covering eventually all humanity ! The Master works thus for bringing about change on a global scale, culminating perhaps in change of such magnitude that we can never hope to even conceive of the various dimensions that such change can embrace. This, then, is His scheme.

What is our part in it ? Our part in it can be covered by just one word — Co-operation ! But little do we realise what this single word really demands of us. It is only as we march on, that we realise that, this co-operation is really an all-embracing thing. We realise that no single facet of our existence can be kept apart from this co-operation. Many imagine that co-operation applies to the spiritual life only. They imagine that it applies only to the practice of the method of meditation taught by the Master. But please think over this. Can we be obedient in one aspect of life without being obedient in all the other aspects of our lives ? Can we fragment our lives into bits and pieces, and claim that co-operation can apply to only one or two of them ? This tragic mistake is made by most of the

abhyasis, who discover, as they go on, that this word "Co-operation" brooks no dismemberment. It is all, or nothing !

What is it that can make such a totality of co-operation possible ? It is discipline ! Discipline alone can make it possible for us to extend to Him the total co-operation that He needs, to make us what He wishes us to be — and then through us to bring about the vaster changes which He wishes to bring about. Discipline is the key to co-operation. Where there is no discipline, there can be no co-operation either. The two may be thought of, as two sides of the same coin, as it were. It would appear as if it mattered little which way the coin falls. It would appear as if it made little difference whether we began with one of them or the other. The only difference seems to be that when we begin with co-operation, discipline begins to become established rather late, if at all, whereas, when we begin with discipline, co-operation follows immediately of its own accord, naturally.

What is the value of discipline ? It is precisely by being disciplined that without even knowing what co-operation implies, or what it even means, we are able to follow each and every wish of the Master, and to act strictly according to His instructions. That is, by being disciplined, obedience follows naturally, and makes the very thing that He wants in us establish itself without our even being aware of it. I am of course referring to co-operation !

In the other way, when we try to begin with co-operation, we are bewildered because we do not know in which area of our lives we are required to co-operate. We run the risk of making the mistake that we are at liberty to choose the areas in which we are required to co-operate, and then find out, often to our annoyance, that it was total co-operation, embracing each and every facet of our

existence, that was necessary — and that too, right from the beginning ! This danger is not faced by one who is disciplined, and who is willing to obey the Master in everything, without dissecting his life into parts, and thinking that obedience is necessary only in some parts. Discipline needs no thought. Discipline needs no understanding. Discipline needs no explanation. Therefore it is possible for all humans to be disciplined. But the very word "discipline" seems to evoke feelings of abhorrence, implying — as it seems to do to some persons — some sort of slavery into which they will be ensnared. Can anything be farther from the truth ? No. Can there be anything which can lead to one's evolution so easily and so quickly ? No ! A disciplined person can achieve the goal of human development most easily and most speedily. My Master defined a disciple as one who is disciplined !

We see before us the levels of degradation to which this idea of a fragmented obedience of the Master's wishes has brought us all. Such a situation has arisen only because discipline is lacking. Some persons think that they are at liberty to obey whatever they want to obey, and to ignore — or even to oppose ! — the rest of His wishes. Instead of bringing about a world of harmony and peace, such misguided action is creating chaos out of prior order. This is a reversal of Master's and Nature's design. In fact it is reversing the trend of Master's work, and giving His teachings the go-by trying to reverse the course of events, thus negating His plans.

It is not necessary to speculate whether such efforts of undisciplined individuals can ever alter the course of events — let alone reversing them — which Master has planned for. What is important to think about is what is going to happen to the development of such misguided individuals who, out of ignorance, selfishness, or greed

for other things than self-development, think that they can possibly change His will. This is what we must brood over. It concerns each and every one of us. DO WE WISH TO FOLLOW HIM UPON THE NOBLE AND DIVINE PATH OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT, OR DO WE DESIRE TO REMAIN HERE, EARTH-BOUND, STAGNATING IN THIS MISERABLE EXISTENCE, BECAUSE OF OUR LUST FOR POWER AND MATERIAL ADVANCEMENT ? This is the question that we must ask ourselves.

His plans can never fail, because they are plans divinely ordained. Then whose will be the failure if we are undisciplined ? Failure and stagnation will be the unfortunate lot of all those who, because of lack of discipline, of obedience, oppose His Will. Failure will be the share of one who seeks to impose chaos upon the state of order that He has so painstakingly created. Instead of co-operating in bringing about order out of chaos, such persons are destroying order and bringing back chaos. They are negating His wishes, and trying to negate the plans of Nature. Can they ever succeed ? No !

This then, is where indiscipline leads us to. Our indiscipline can never affect His work. Our lack of co-operation can never alter His design for bringing about change. All that our indiscipline can possibly achieve — if it can be called achievement — is our own stagnation, and possible fall from the levels that He has so benevolently blessed us with. Life will pass us by, leaving us grasping the toys and dolls of lesser aspiration, while those who co-operate in the magnificent venture of participating in Change, will follow Him into Eternity.

It is the imperative need of the hour that we understand the need for discipline, and to correct our attitude and action to ensure that the train does not go off

the rails. On this auspicious occasion may He bless all with the necessary understanding and courage to follow Him with faith and fortitude.

12

AS ABOVE, SO BELOW

An ancient maxim has been handed down from generation to generation; and its origin appears to be lost in the hoary past. It says, "As above, so below !" Somewhat in tune with this idea, we have another tradition from one of the great religions of the world, which says, "God made man in His own image !" These once formed the topic of discussion with my Master, Samarth Guru Mahatma Shri Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur, and He cautioned me that the meaning commonly attributed to them could lead an aspirant astray, by lulling the mind into a sense of false security. He warned me that since they seem to imply that a human being is already what he ought to be, the common man may fail to take any steps for his growth. He emphasised that these two maxims have made many persons assume that they have already achieved everything that there is to be achieved, and because such an assumption is totally false, the danger lay precisely in that assumption ! "Has not God made man in His own image ?" they ask. "Then what is there that yet remains for us to do ? He has made us as Himself." In this fashion do many persons delude themselves, and the questioner remains what he was, without even the possibility of rising to higher levels until he understands the meaning of such statements correctly.

My Master warned me, "A sense of achievement puts a bar to advancement. The person automatically stops making any efforts, and in this lies the greatest danger to one's progress." A sense of achievement or

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Message delivered on 9th February 1985 at Lucknow celebration.

accomplishment breeds a sense of complacency in our minds, and thus puts a stop to all further effort and to progress.

What then is the truth behind the above statements handed down to us by the mystic and occult traditions of the past ? Do they represent statements of fact or not ? Are the statements to be taken as eternal verities ? Do they, in fact, mean what human beings of all ages have assumed them to mean, or is the meaning attributed to them, merely wishful thinking on our part ?

My Master was never tired of saying, "The truth is revealed to him who seeks it." It is therefore very clear that we have to seek out the truth, instead of passively accepting what has been said. Age alone does not confer any special merit on anything. Nor do ancient statements have to be accepted as true only because they are ancient. Their truth has to be tested again and again, generation after generation, by fresh school of aspirants. The touch-stone is the testing procedure, which alone can affirm the truth again and again. According to my Master, many things repeated in this fashion, century after century, and believed to be absolute truths, have been found to be of questionable value. If we are interested in our spiritual progress, we have to strive to realise the truth by trying to achieve, or attain, a state of being akin to what these famous and oft-repeated statements of the past say. In other words, we have to practise some method which can possibly reveal to us the truth in our own selves by creating the condition in us, which alone can give us the true experience of that condition. There is no other way. This is what my Master has taught me.

In the tradition of this country, there is a famous statement which makes its earliest appearance in the Rig-Veda. It later reappears in the Katha Upanishad. It says

that the immortal fig tree, representing Brahman, has its roots above, and its leaves and branches below. The Bhagavad Gita repeats this same thing in a slightly modified version. In discussion with my Master, this quotation was once the topic. Master pointed out to me that this oft-repeated, but little understood couplet gives the hint to the truth. My Master very kindly explained to me that this imagery of the fig tree, inverted in space, really shows that all things below, all life below, should draw their sustenance directly from above. If they do so, then they acquire the possibility of becoming like that which is above — the Ultimate itself !

What does 'sustenance' mean ? We normally associate it with the needs of the physical body, such as food, drink, clothing etc. Some may be tempted to ask, "We need food and water. How can it come from above ? Do we not have to strive hard to fulfil our needs of life here ?" But in times of acute distress or suffering, we turn naturally to prayer, thus answering the question ourselves ! We also need emotional sustenance in the form of affection and love. For the fulfilment of this need we tend to look to our friends and relatives. Here, again, some are tempted to ask, "Can God love us ? Can He be affectionate towards us ? He may bless us with all that we need. He may even be merciful enough to grant our prayers, but can He love us ?" Such persons may even believe in one tiny corner of their heart that "God is Love" ! But that He can love us, perhaps very few would be willing to believe.

In seeking for love and affection from fellow humans, many have lost sight of the true goal of human life. The desire to love, and to be loved, would appear to be far stronger than the desire for the material things and pleasure of life. In this lies the real danger in seeking for it below. Even advanced souls have not escaped from this

emotional trap. In their desire for love and attention when they diverted their gaze from Him, above, to fellow humans down here, they suffered the consequences of their folly.

Many have a need, as they imagine, for money or power or position. For all these things they look below and the consequences are tragic. We delude ourselves with the idea of greatness, or power, or position, and remain here as merely human beings with the lowest of aspirations, searching for them in lowest of planes of existence.

My Master teaches : It is He, and He alone, the Master of calibre, who can grant us what we need to cross this ocean of human existence and reach the other shore safely. Therefore, it is wisdom to look to Him, and to Him alone for our needs. Our wants lead us astray. We have to distinguish between "needs" and "wants". He provides our needs. We have to give up our desires which must be abandoned in our aspiration for the higher life, in our progress towards the goal.

Our experience teaches us that the desire to be loved, to be wanted, is perhaps the greatest pitfall on the path of the aspirant. Alas ! How many have tumbled and fallen because of this desire ! Even advanced souls are not immune to this danger. The higher we rise, the greater the fall, and the greater the disaster. From such a fall very few are able to rise again, and for that too the merciful Master has to help us by pulling us up once again. My Master once very graciously elucidated this point for me. He said, "Human love has tremendous potential, but it fails because of being misdirected. Love is the greatest force. It must be humbly offered up to Him who alone is its true object — God or Master whichever you may like to call Him. You must love Him in such a way that your love

knocks on the door of His heart, telling Him that the lover is waiting outside. Then He begins to love you, and when this happens, all your problems of life are solved ! Love Him who loves all." This is the greatest revelation of my Divine Master.

Thanks to my Beloved Master, we now begin to understand that things below are not already as IT is above. But they can be as IT is above, provided that the sustenance for our existence is drawn from above. Our existence, and the needs of that existence must all be derived from the source of all existence -- from Him who is portrayed as being 'above' — the Divine in human form, none other than the Beloved Master Himself. What can we get from here below ? Food and drink ? Perhaps ! Clothing ? Perhaps ! Why perhaps ? Because sometimes it may happen that a situation arises when even the breath becomes impossible without His providing the air for us to breathe. Then we realise that in our foolishness we had imagined that we could get our needs fulfilled independent of Him. Then dawns the realisation that without His sanction, even the air we breathe cannot be had. But if we look to Him for everything, then we not only have all that He is waiting to shower upon us, but because He is now sustaining us, the way opens for us to become like Him.

According to my Master, what these mahavakyas (as they can perhaps be called, though not in the vedic sense of the word) really say is that human being can aspire to become That which is the Ultimate, provided he looks only to Him for his every breath, and for his every need, for his brief existence in this world. This is what they really mean.

Discussing this idea of sustenance again : it is possible to have as many meanings for this word as there are levels

of existence, levels of being. At the lowest level, it means that we should think that everything that we need in this mortal existence is coming from Him, the Divine Master. At a higher level, everything that we possess appears to us as if they are really all His possessions, the use of which is granted to us for our survival. At the next stage, the feeling arises that they are left in our charge, to be looked after by us in the role of trustees. Everything is His; we are merely trustees charged with the responsibility of looking after them meticulously and scrupulously, in the serene knowledge that one day we shall have to render account to Him. The idea of possession has left us.

At the next higher stage, even the idea of trusteeship seems to vanish. Why does it vanish ? Because the very idea of doer-ship associated with the act of preserving or looking after something now bids good-bye. The idea that we do anything, or that we have the capacity to do anything, now vanishes from our mind. We are now in a state, or condition, where we have no consciousness of having anything, nor of doing anything. Yet the idea of duty remains, and this stage really seems to display all the signs of the beginning of spirituality because, while the sense of duty yet lingers on in our minds, the idea that we have to perform the duty no longer exists in our minds. The marvellous truth that we begin to perceive is that even for the proper performance of our duty we have to look up to Him for help and guidance. In fact the stage develops into the next one by itself where we experience Him as the performer of our duty, and not ourselves.

What can be the condition of such a person at the next higher stage with which his Master is waiting to bless him? Is it possible to have a peep into it ? My Master very graciously answers this question for our benefit. Master says that at the next higher stage, the devotee, having lost

the sense of possession, of independent action, of action itself, and finally of the sense of duty too, now begins to lose the idea that he exists independently of Him, the Beloved ! The physical body is perceived as being His. The means for its maintenance are very graciously and lovingly provided by Him. What we thought of as being our duty is perceived to be allotted by Him. The fulfilment of the duty is also seen to be His work, and His alone. Having realised all this stage by stage, how is it possible for us to continue to have the idea of an existence which is separate from His Divine Existence ? So this idea, too, now bids good-bye. My Master told me that when an abhyasi, a true devotee of the Master, comes up to this level by His Grace, the idea of his individual, separate existence begins to leave him. It is an indication that the next higher existence is now being conferred upon him by the Master. It is by the Grace of the Almighty and Benevolent Master alone that such progress towards the Goal becomes possible.

We may venture to state that only at this stage of one's spiritual progress does one begin to realise that the famous statements quoted earlier are really promises held out to mankind of what can be possible, and not statements of facts already established in the life of human beings. They are promises of what can be achieved if one adopts the proper course of life, and devotes one's time and effort to the achievement of the Goal. It is very important to realise the truth of this statement, as otherwise we are liable to be misled into thinking that we are already that which we have to become !

The ancient mystics and seers intuitively perceived that human beings have to grow and evolve. This idea of growth was linked to the idea of the Goal to be achieved. Then the third thing was attached to these two. What was

it ? It was of course the human individual. This conjoining of the three, the individual, his Goal, and the process of becoming which alone could enable him to achieve the Goal, was put into the beautifully condensed form : As above, so below ! It was a promise that things below, life below, can be as they are above, provided we take the trouble, and make the necessary effort, to develop and establish such a state of being in ourselves.

What happens then ? At this highest level, the devotee finds that there is no longer anything that can be called 'lower' or 'higher'. All is one grand, Divine existence by the Master, for the Master, and in the Master. The devotee, the way and the Master have all become one !!

My Beloved and Divine Master has shown us by His own life that such an existence is possible. In achieving the highest state, He also mastered the way, and thus is able to guide us there Himself. He adopted the human form out of His Divine compassion and mercy for mankind, to show us a simple and effective method for us to reach our Goal — HIM ! By achieving the Goal in His own lifetime, He has proved to every one of us that we too can similarly achieve it in our own lifetimes. His life was nothing but an existence assumed by Him to set an example for us to emulate.

I offer my humble gratitude to my Divine Master who came down to us only to lift us up to Himself. May He live for ever in the hearts of all mankind!

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EVOLUTION

We are coming to the close of our morning session.

Brother Sarnadji, Secretary of this Mission, a scholar in his own right, one of the Divine products of my Master's spiritual wonder, a man with full and onerous responsibilities, has humbly effaced himself without mentioning the fact that all the books in Kannada have come from his pen, having been translated by him. All this he has not mentioned, and rightfully so, because the jewel shining on the heart of the Lord reflects the greatness of the Almighty, not of itself. He has given us a beautiful exposition of what Sahaj Marg is, what Master's work is, the books that the Master wrote, the Paddhati, and what it can achieve for us.

My respected sister Kasturiji, in her exposition, also dwelt on what Sahaj Marg is, some of her intimate associations with Master, intimate experiences, the value of the experience, how experiences indicate progress, anubhav, growth and so on. And our younger brother Kannan talked about change, and the need for change as reflecting growth and progress.

Now I have to just emphasise one point. That is, while change seems to be inevitable and is a direct indicator of growth, there comes a stage where any change can be arrested; it cannot be altogether stopped. It can be arrested, wilfully, by us. Because we find in Nature that change goes on and on. Planets go on rotating in their orbits. The Sun goes on shining. The Moon goes on

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Talk at the Founder's day celebration of Karnataka State on 17th March 1985.

reflecting the Sun. And if there is a break in any of these systems, that we see in this enormous marvellous universe outside, that would instantly put a stop to all life.

It seems as if God in His magnificent generosity, His mercy and in His desire to continue life, has been able to organise, to create and to set in motion an inanimate Universe which obeys His laws impeccably, continuously, for ever. The inanimate part of the Universe is not a problem to the Almighty or to itself. No planet is worried for itself, it does not pray for food, it does not pray for clothing, it does not even pray for mercy; it goes about in its orbit, performing the Almighty's command, revolving around the Sun and revolving around itself. If the process is stopped perhaps even God cannot save us.

Then, we come to the animate part of the Universe. There also we find that there are plants and animals — what we think in our own egoistic way — (because the human being thinks that he is the culmination of the process of evolution) — in our arrogance, in our egoism, we look down upon plant life and animal life, even mineral life — as something below us, something low, forgetting that they also obey God's commandments, they also obey God's laws; no change is arrested. They continue to grow.

The seed falls on the ground, it germinates, becomes a sapling, a tree, and it gives thousands of itself. Not one of you here would sow a seed if you are going to get back only one seed. I would like to imagine an agriculturist who plants one grain of rice (paddy) to get back only one grain of paddy again, or a businessman who invests one rupee in business to get back that one rupee in business; or, the poultry people who keep a chicken only to get another egg out of it. The law of Nature is impeccable. It says, "Multiply." If you are only going to grow and die

after fulfilling your own selfish desires, needs, wants, cravings, and all that you are going to return unto Him is what He put into you, — "a handful of mud" — mud thou shalt remain. So the law of Nature is, my dear friends, Growth has to be there, evolution has to be there; not because I choose it or you choose it, but because God wills it to be so. God did not create anything in this Universe which just produced itself and satisfied itself, and died and said : "Almighty Lord, thank you for sustenance. I was born happy, I die happy, and you gave me life, I return this life to you." God will say, "Fie, is this for what I created you ?"

In the Christian tradition there is a beautiful parable — a man and his three sons. He decided to go away as a test for his children. He gave them one talent each, and said, "When I return I shall hold you accountable for this talent." He came back after 20 years. The eldest was a meek fellow, without any enterprise, but conscious of some sense of duty; he buried it under a tree. When father returned, he dug it out and returned it to his father and said, "Father, I return to you the one talent." The second son lent it out. When the father came back, instead of one, he was able to return two hundred. It had multiplied. The third son had invested it wisely in much business, and when the father asked him for his talent, he said, "Father, I cannot return it to you, but everything that you will see around is that — that talent. It has grown manifold, changing the environment — it is your talent." And the father said, "You have done wisely, you have used it wisely, all the talents are yours."

So, when we talk of spirituality, very often we talk of craving, we talk of need, we talk of want, as if we had any choice whether we will grow or not. This very idea of choice, whether we can participate "in my growth, in my evolution" implies that I also have the choice of not

participating in it. This, to my mind, is the most foolish concept that yogic literature and religious literature have placed before us. Because I would like to tell you that we have no choice at all. Nothing which does not evolve continues to exist; it decays and dies. Those of you who are familiar with science know that there were multiple forms of existence in this world, even in this tiny world of ours — which having lost the mainstream of evolution, fell by the wayside and ceased to exist. So, that which does not obey the laws of evolution ceases to exist; it has no place, no existence, no right to exist. We blindly imagine that everyone has a right to exist; yes, so long as we obey the purpose behind that right, so long as we obey the purpose that God ordained when He created us. If we go against it, the right is liable to be withdrawn. Fortunately for us, we are never aware of it, because we go into oblivion from which there is no return. It is said in the literature that when you obey His laws you reach a situation from which there is no return ! But on the other side also there is another 'Dhaama', which is not 'Paramdhaama'; where we are eternally oblivious of the punishment that is given out to us, where we are condemned to an eternity of grossness, of darkness, of misery — fortunately God in His mercy does not give us the consciousness to be aware of it !

So, why I am stressing this point is to tell you that : "If any human being thinks he has a choice in his personal evolution, let him think over it a hundred times." Like your child cannot say, "Papa, I don't wish to grow. Let me remain three years old." You have no choice in the matter of growth, in the internal dimensions of spiritual growth. Your child cannot say, "I don't want education. I am happy as I am. Mother gives me sweets. You bring me presents. Everybody who comes into the house loves me,

adores me, kisses me, pets me. Let me remain ever a child." You will say, "My dear son, this is not for which you were born. Look at the next door man. Look at Maruthi, look at Vikram. Yesterday they were children, today they are riding bicycles, in two years they will be riding Lunas (mopeds), and then they will be on the job, they will get married. Don't you want to be like them ?" "No, no papa, I am happy as I am. This blissful state of childhood where will I get ?" But as adults, we wish to remain foolish, we wish to remain arrogant, we wish to remain selfish, self indulgent, attached to pleasures, attached to gratification of the senses, hoping that God will permit us to continue to enjoy our existence, at our will, not His Will, and we have a separate existence, and that we need not participate in our evolution.

I stress the word "participation" because I deny that a human being has any possibility of growth by himself. Given the samskaras, given the awful burden of samskaras that we have brought with us, it is like expecting a stone to do something by itself. We are as immovable, as incapable of self motion or movement, as a stone is today because our inner samskara is so awful in its gross tendencies, that any individual who thinks that he is free to do as he chooses, is blind. If he thinks he is moving, if he thinks he is speaking, if he thinks he is acting, yes; he is acting like a locomotive under the power of steam — our steam being the compulsion of the samskaras that are in us, which makes one become a scholar, he doesn't know why he becomes a scholar; another becomes an artist, he doesn't know why he becomes an artist; another becomes a doctor, he also doesn't know why. A man who becomes something and doesn't know why he became that, is under a compulsive existence. He is under the pressure of compulsive forces locked up in him — no better than a

steam locomotive which goes on and on until the steam pressure is exhausted, and it can move us no more. But when the Almighty is given a seat in the heart, and the cleaning takes place and the samskaric burden is removed, the first traces of freedom begin; we can now take a positive hand in guiding our own evolution, we get into the mainstream of evolutionary existence, which God's will dominates, which His purpose guides, and the Destination which is Himself, is there. This is the aspect that I want to emphasise before you, that if anyone should think he has an opportunity, "yes"; if he has a choice, "no." Never has it existed, never shall it exist, that I have a choice to stop my evolution.

But I repeat, there are times when we can arrest that evolution, like keeping a packet of seeds locked up in a drawer for ten years, and you can say, "I am the master of the situation, because this seed cannot, dare not mature and become a plant. This much I can do. I can do it not only to a packet of seeds, I can do it to myself." You can say, "What is this power of the Lord that you people are speaking about ? He is the Ultimate, He is the Infinite. He has no power over me. I am the same fool, the same arrogant, prideful, lusty individual that I was, and He cannot change me." Then we find out, sometimes too late, that if He wishes to do it, like a stone cutter breaking open a stone, He can do it at the cost of our lives — I mean the temporal life here. But the yogic Masters however are not so unkind. Therefore, the concept is not of videha mukti but sadeha mukti. It is a blessing for us, because the Grace, the charity, the mercy that we attribute to God — which in the 'para-rupa' He does not possess, that is what the shastras say — He assumes when He descends to take the form of a Guru and deals with us mercifully, lovingly, kindly, when He says, "Yes, you want to remain what you

are and yet you want to become what I want you to become, 'Thathastu'. I will permit you to do it. You can still retain your human form, you can still retain your human tendencies, but let me refine them, let me divert them to the right Goal, divert them to the right orientation." It is like turning a car. I don't interfere with its speed, I change the direction. So the Guru comes precisely to give us the Love and the Service which the Ultimate cannot give us. Of this, there are some references in the Puranas. I need not bore you with them. Siva and Parvati try to help a bhakta. Vishnu in his purana tries to help a bhakta. The bhakta is going ahead without taking any notice of the blessings that are being showered upon him in material form; he says, "these are all nonsense."

So all that I am trying to tell you is that evolution cannot be denied, evolution cannot be stopped. There is no such thing as progress. Ideas of progress and regress, of day and night, of advance and return, these have given us the wrong ideas, misunderstandings, that there is a possibility of going in two directions. Yes, temporarily. I am fond of giving the example of a wheel which is in motion. The whole wheel is going forward. But at the bottom-most point it is momentarily moving backwards (otherwise it will not rotate). But at that point, if that part of the wheel should think in its arrogance "I am moving backwards, how can the wheel move forwards?" It would be making the same mistake that human beings almost without exception are making — that they think they can stop evolution because they, with their tiny egos, tiny arrogances, tiny achievements, insignificant in this grand universe that we are facing — they also think that they can retard progress, that they can curb society, that they can take away Sita from Rama, things like that. History teaches us otherwise. Evolution teaches us otherwise. I can sit back, I cannot stop growth.

So, my prayer to you, friends, brothers and sisters, is — "Get into the mainstream. Remain in the mainstream of Evolution. No choice is involved." I have just to give up "myself" and float.

EVOLUTION (CONCLUDING ADDRESS)

Those who have heard the morning talk will recall that I said, there is no choice in the matter of personal evolution. Only co-operation is there. All that we can do is to delay it a little here and there and suffer by the delay.

I gave the example of the packet of seeds, which you can keep without sowing even for years, and think we have prevented the course of Nature, but all that we achieve is to delay the process. What Nature cannot get from us by co-operation, it will somehow get by other ways. All those who have trained children, who have trained animals, know that there are two ways of training — the 'way of love' and the 'way of force'. The way of force is obnoxious, we don't like it. No parent likes to train his child by force. No animal trainer ever uses force — it is the way of love. Nature too, does not use force on us.

It is a great misconception to think that God punishes or that God rewards. My Master has repeated over and over again that reward and punishment do not exist. Of course, religions have taught — it is not the speciality of any single religion — all religions have said again and again that good action is rewarded, bad action is punished; for virtue we go to heaven, for sins we go to hell — all these sorts of things are being propagated by religions. As my Master has said, the instruments of religion are sin and temptation. Religions have always

tried to guide humanity into what the leaders of religion felt was the correct course of action, by tempting man with offers of heaven and salvation and by trying to guide him with fears of hell and damnation. But Sahaj Marg, my Master's system, does not recognise the existence of either of these two. Man is not a child to be tempted or to be guided with fears. So, in every man and woman there reside childish tendencies and animal tendencies. So, if we suffer or if we enjoy, it is because our tendencies manifest, we behave like animals, perform animal-like actions, suffer the consequences of our own actions. There is no punishing agency. For the good tendencies, similarly we have good actions, feel self-satisfied, get the praise of our neighbours, of society, and feel consequently happy. We are rewarding ourselves. There is no God in heaven who is rewarding us or punishing us.

So, in Sahaj Marg these two things are absolutely unrecognised. Why, they don't exist first ! We don't recognise the existence of virtue or vice. In Sahaj Marg the greatest teaching of the Master, which He says again and again is : "Every thought that we think, every act that we indulge in, these leave impressions on our mind which subsequently form samskaras, and which guide our future actions and thoughts. So it is we who create our futures. If we suffer, it is because in the past we had acted in such a way, thought in such a way, that we have created certain samskaras, which push us into certain tendencies, the consequences of which are inevitable."

So, my Master says : "From now you start moulding your thinking and your actions in such a way that you are able to live without the formation of impressions." A stage comes when we can think without forming impressions upon our minds, we can act without forming impressions. Because, one who is born, who is being born

into this world cannot live without thought and action. This is one of the truths which is said by Lord Krishna in the Gita. He says, "Even I am not free of action, but the difference between you and me, Arjuna, is whereas you are bound by action and thought and you are bound by the results of your actions, I am not bound either by my actions or the results of my actions." He does not explain why. He does not explain what is the difference that binds one and does not bind the other. That my Master has said. What the Lord does not reveal in the Gita, my Master has revealed, and has said, "It is precisely because a person can live without forming impressions that he has no more any sense of the future." Such a person can be said to live eternally in the present. The future is right in my present — or, if you like to think of it the other way, my present is in the future, both co-exist. I do not create anything for myself from such a moment. So this is one of the greatest teachings of Sahaj Marg, that it liberates us — we are talking all the time of liberation — liberation from what? Liberation from myself, liberation from my thoughts, liberation from my actions, which have hitherto, through aeons of time, through many births and deaths, bound me to the slavery of my own self. I am the slave of myself, not of any God, not of Satan, not of Hell, not of Heaven. If anybody has imprisoned me, it is myself. If anybody is making me suffer, it is myself. This greatest truth unrevealed hitherto, — hinted at perhaps in Hindu literature but nowhere else — is that "Friend, you are your own salvation, or you are your own condemnation. Get rid of yourself, and there you are."

Many people ask us, somewhat naively, somewhat childishly, "Why do you want to participate in yoga abhyas ? Why do you want to do meditation ? Are you dissatisfied with life ? Are you frightened of yourself ? Are

you frightened of the consequences of existence ? Why are you seeking to escape ?" I must tell you most emphatically that yoga is not a means of escape — from either this life or future life or anything. We are not escapists. If anybody thinks yoga is escapism, then they are equating yoga with things like drugs and drinks. We are not escapists. As I told you this morning, I wish to emphasise again, we are not participating in meditation and this process of Sahaj Marg to escape from life.

We are participating in it to make our life what it should really be – a Divine Existence, free of temptations, free of problems, free of worries, free of sickness, all of which we have caused ourselves. Any child knows that if it eats something wrong or eats too much of something which may be very good, it suffers from its own misdeeds. Every drunkard knows that it is his drunkenness which is condemning him to headache, to liver problems, to cirrhosis, and ultimately to death.

Do you mean to say that God has nothing better to do than to watch millions of humanity through aeons of time, looking at each one and seeing what he is doing and what she is doing, and then condemning us and punishing us ? On the one side we say, "God is Love" ! On the other side we say that He is condemning, He is punishing, and He is sending us to hell this way or to heaven this way. If you permit me to say it, if you pardon me for saying it, it is one of the most childish conceptions of God. And, unfortunately, no religion is free from it. All religions have been uttering this foolishness from the time man became conscious of himself. I can possibly not conceive of a God, who has no better business to do than to think of us, watch us, punish us, to condemn us and judge us ! It is we who suffer, by our own actions, by our own thoughts.

Let this be clearly understood. If I am seeking to escape from anything, it is from the consequences of my own foolishness, of my own viciousness, of my own selfishness, knowing that these are the causes of my bondage, because they lead me into actions from the results of which I cannot escape. Once we indulge in a thought, action follows. Once action results from that thought, its result comes. Its result has its own consequence. It is a form of "breeder reaction". No external agency but myself is responsible for this. This is the most fundamental truth that we have got to recognise and understand. When we know the true import of this, it is no longer necessary to fear a God or approach a God in a slavish beggarly way, seeking benefits which He cannot give.

God does not want us either to demand from Him, or to slavishly beg of Him. Because, in His Ultimate Mercy, Charity, Divine Grace is flowing all the time everywhere. It is like praying to the Sun, "Please give me illumination." Sitting in a dark room, where we close the doors and windows, we pray to the Lord of the Sun, "Oh Almighty Lord, bless me with sunshine !" Could the Sun speak, it would only ask : "My dear boy, when did I ever stop shining ? From the beginning of creation I am shining, and I am shining without prejudice. I know no caste, I know no colour, I do not know whether you are human or animal. I don't shine for you. I shine because it is my nature to shine." Similarly, God does not bless, knowing that He is blessing. If He were to do that, He is no better than a human being.

It is said in the great religions that let not thy right hand know what thy left hand is doing. If that applies to man, human beings, how much more should it not apply to God Almighty Himself ? Can He be ever conscious that

He is punishing me, rewarding you, condemning her ? Then, when God becomes conscious of what we in Hinduism call "Duality" — *dwandvas* — if He Himself is conscious of punishment, reward, sin and virtue, where is His Divinity ? These are our conceptions ! These are concepts created by man to judge himself, to evaluate his neighbours, and to evaluate the behaviour of society. God did not create good and evil. God did not teach that there is 'good and evil' or 'vice and virtue'. In fact He cannot teach because He cannot know what is good and what is bad. Because, as I said a little earlier, if He knows that two things are existing, He ceases to be God.

So, this is something — you know it is very shocking when we hear it first — it may be very troublesome to understand, it may be very difficult to understand, that God cannot be conscious of good, God cannot be conscious of evil, God cannot be conscious of darkness, God cannot be conscious of light.

It is all right, religions have said that God said, "let there be light", and there was light. It was man who said 'God said !' We have not heard God saying it ! It was a man who said it, you see, that God said such and such a thing. Because it is the human endeavour to understand the mystery behind creation. It is the human mind which evolves a concept of God, which evolves an idea of God, because it requires something to aspire to, to aspire for, something to reach up to, something ultimately to achieve. And to that we ascribe the doership of everything that we see and hear and smell and taste and what not.

So, I may even venture to say – as some philosophers have also said before me — that God is a human creation. Because, for those of us who have not achieved the Divine state of existence, we do not know what God really is, who God is, whether such a thing exists. It is like a beggar

talking of wealth. For him, instead of five paise, if he gets ten paise, it is wealth ! What is the meaning of wealth ? It is a comparative statement. One man gets ten rupees, another man gets fifteen rupees, the man who gets ten rupees envies the man who gets fifteen rupees ! So, there are no absolute concepts. So, my Master says, "Wait till you reach That State. Then only can you know what Divinity is !" And, what is the way of knowing Divinity ? To become Divinised yourself ! By knowing yourself at That Level, you will know what He is ! Till then God is an abstract entity, it is a mere concept about which we have no authority to speak, about which we have no knowledge at all which can enable us to speak, whom we have never experienced in our existence, either as a punisher or as a rewarder. So, let me say to all those who speak about God without having become divinised themselves — "Well, your statement is as good as mine !" So, this is one of the most fundamental concepts of Sahaj Marg, in the teachings of my Master, that God is an abstract thing, a notion, that if He exists, we have to find out whether He exists, by advancing on the path of Divinisation by the help of a Master who comes to us in a human form, and says, "My dear friend, now this is the state of God Himself ! This is what we call the Divine State of Existence ! Now you know it by personal experience !"

Can we see God ? No, because there is no physical form to see. He is nameless, you cannot call Him by any name. He is formless, you cannot see His form. He has no qualities, therefore you cannot describe Him by any quality; and, finally, my Master says, God can have no mind because when He has a mind He has consciousness. When He has consciousness the duality of existence is before Him.—He ceases to be Divinity, the Ultimate Divinity; He may be the son of God, but He cannot be God Himself.

So, I wanted to amplify my morning talk by adding a few more facets about Sahaj Marg and dispel this ignorant idea that people, who indulge in the participation in self evolution, are running away from life. Let me assure you that in Sahaj Marg we do not run away from life. We are trying to break our way into real life, into eternal Life, into Divine Life, but leaving behind us, all those foolish miseries of a human existence, of a merely human existence, by throwing off our chains of bondage which are nothing but our own creation, created by our past thoughts, by our actions.

This is the first level of liberation, that I liberate myself from myself ! Then follow subsequent liberations from so many things which I pray that our Master may bless us all with !

Thank you.

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TIME

This is a classical example, of how in trying to avoid trouble today, we get into trouble tomorrow ! I never thought that by not speaking yesterday I would be forced to speak today !

So, there is a hidden meaning in this. If at all you have to be in trouble, it is better to be in trouble today, when we can afford to do it, when we have the strength to do it, when we have the means to do it, when we have the time to do it ! Whereas if we postpone it, you may find yourselves in a situation where you are too old, without the necessary capacity, without the necessary strength, and that the problem which you put off to solve on a later day, is beyond your capacity to resolve ! This happens to all of us in school : "We don't want to study today, we will study tomorrow." So "Today" is always being delayed, with the result the boy fails ! Most people go to office, what they cannot solve, they put off : "We will look after it later. Let us solve all the easy problems first — easier files, easier papers." What happens is, the hard ones always remain at the table; tomorrow it becomes harder, the day after tomorrow it becomes almost impossible to do it !

So, "the same wisdom", Master says, "bring it to your Sadhana." You see, when we get up in the morning, it is a common experience, most of us wake up sufficiently early to instinctively obey the first commandment. I mean it is part of the Indian way of life, that generally we are awake before the Sun rises. But how many of us meditate ? The westerners find it impossible to get up ! But Nature has

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Talk at Bangalore on 19th March 1985.

made us, or trained us in such a way, that we cannot avoid waking up. But having woken up, we cover our heads, cover our feet, and "lie down", as we say, "a few minutes more", and we get up at half past seven !

One morning is lost ! We say, "What does it matter ? There are umpteen mornings in my life ! Let me meditate tomorrow morning ! From tomorrow, I shall be regular !" If there is any truth that is revealed by this sort of attitude, it is that "tomorrow never comes" ! Not for us !

So, what has to be done today, must be done today, NOW — performing the duty of the moment at that moment itself, and fulfilling the responsibility to that moment — It is not to society, it is not to people, it is to TIME itself we are fulfilling a responsibility ! Time tells, "My dear friend, I am here. I am passing." Have you answered this appeal ? Forget God, forget society, forget your friends. It is when the rain rains, the Vyavasayee (farmer) must be ready with his field tilled, ready to sow the seed, ready to do the harvest. Otherwise he has to wait for the next rains. It may not come. Every Vyavasayee (agriculturist) knows this, that he must be fully prepared. "Time and tide wait for no man." And we also know ourselves the value of time. Those of us who wish to make money, say "I have no time, Sir. I have an appointment here. I have to go to the bank. I have to file the income-tax returns." They are rushing ! "Rushing" means, in one way, trying to overcome the speed of time itself, by making more use of that time, than time would normally allow us ! And, we have this experience in meditation, that either time is shortened, when we have a one hour sitting and it looks like five minutes; or we have the elongation of time, when we have meditated five minutes and it looks like one hour ! So, this is an indication that if man would but make the requisite effort, time can be

lengthened or shortened. It is not just a mere matter of a subjective experience, or a subjective consciousness, that we feel time is lengthened or shortened.

It is my personal experience that time CAN BE expanded in such a way that you can put eternity into one moment of time ! Otherwise it is meaningless. If time is going to be like a footrule, the 'twelve inches' always a 'twelve inches', what is the fun in trying to do more in less time ? Language also has a meaning. I mean, does the individual understand it when I say, that for one who works, time seems to be more than time itself ? Like for one who wants to love or to be loved, love itself makes the way open for further love. It is the thing in which you participate that enables you to participate in that thing itself. It is like, you know, the classic occult symbolism of the snake swallowing its own tail ! In some way, we have to make use of time to overcome time. And that is what we are doing in our spiritual Sadhana !

When we talk of liberation, realisation, merger, and all these things, we are using time to gain time, to overcome time. It means a lift from time to eternity. And as regards eternity, the most foolish concept is that eternity is unlimited time ! It is as silly as saying that enjoyment of food is in going on eating it for ever and ever! The wise man knows that if he puts one drop of honey on his tongue, it is enough ! He has enjoyed its taste ! You don't have to swallow a bottle of honey and then purge ! And, if you refer to the Gita where Krishna says, "I am Time; Kalosmi", God has to be used. And, if you cannot use God to achieve God, it is not possible to achieve Him in any other way ! It is like fire fighting fire; like setting a thief to catch a thief; using a needle to prick out the thorn in your foot; we have to use that which is causing the trouble to overcome that trouble — use that which has

been causing you that trouble. It looks very complicated when you put it to work. But it is really so easy, trying to overcome time to get out of the clutches of time to slip into Eternity ! Because if God says, "I am Time", you have to use God to overcome God Himself, look beyond Him into the Ultimate, where He does not (as God) exist anymore ! There He is no longer God ! We call Him "It" ! "That thou art." We don't say "Him thou art." We say, "That thou art." "Tat Twam Asi."

So, now it becomes necessary that I know what time is. I know what God is, or at least I accept that there is something called God. If I know that, this is a ladder which will enable me to climb to the first floor, and you say, "I don't accept this ladder", well; you have to remain where you are ! It is the beauty of ladders, that they can permit you to climb up, without themselves going up ! It is a funny idea (you know sometimes I think I can be misunderstood as being disrespectful) when I say that every stone that is set across or set over in climbing to the temple and going into the 'Sannidhi' or the sanctum-sanctorum of the temple, is made of stone ! We have still the consciousness of stepping on it ! Yet without that stone we cannot step up ! It is not necessary that something which is serving you should be higher than you! Per contra, there is no need to assume that it is lower than you ! It is there at your service. The barber is there. We have to go to him for shaving. The old brahmins used to think that he is a "neecha jaathiwala" (lower caste). They used to bathe when they came back ! But bath or no bath, you have to go to him for a hair cut ! Isn't it ? The barber has his function ..... !

It is a funny thing that most of those people whose services are absolutely essential were low caste people — the barber, the dhobis, the chamars. And, ultimately

when the body has to be disposed off, without the attendants at the burial ground, without their services, we can not get the job done. And perhaps it is to prove this truth, — that "My dear fellow, however great you are, you need this service !" — that Harischandra was made into a burning-ghat attendant himself, — "Experience it, my dear friend ! See what it is to consign your own son to the flames." So, this is this concept of 'high and low', — that stupid concept, that vulgar concept, that inhuman concept, if you will permit me to say it ! I think personally that everytime we praise our Master, we are really insulting Him : "He is beyond praise, He is beyond slander, He is beyond insult." And this is our stupidity, our ego, that we want a pat from Him, His hands on our backs when we say, "Babuji, you are superior, you are beautiful." "Haan, haan, yes, yes." And in His heart He says. "Look at this fellow, trying to tell me what I am ! Does he know what I am ?" We are fools, presuming that He is too humble, He is too kind, too generous, too loving -- but if you have been able to interpret His mind, His piercing glance, you would have kept your mouth shut for all time, after that !! "I dared not speak in His presence !" How can you tell Him what He is, without knowing what He is ? So, as I said in Tirupathi about a month or two ago, we are liars, as shown by the fact that we are flattering Him; ' flattering ' being a description of a person of whom we know nothing ! And, if you say, "How dare you say such a thing ?", I would quote the Master Himself who said, "everybody comes to see me, but nobody sees me." He need not have said it if it was not true !

So, what do we know of the Master that we think that we can evaluate Him, much less His Master, Lalaji, or even His successor ? This is all a futile exercise ! What do

we know of Masters ? What do we know of mastery ? We are here to receive the meanest, the lowest service the Master is offering us ! Master has said that the service of the abhyasi in the heart region is like plunging into the gutters of humanity, the sink; the stink that we have to bear there ! You should have seen His face when He said these things; the expression on His face ! He used to say, you know ..... ! This is service existing ! His successor is nothing but a sweeper of gutters ! And if you call him a Master, it is your fault. He is a sweeper, but a very necessary sweeper. Because we all know that if the water stops in the tank, we can exist; but if the latrine gets choked up, we are in deep trouble, because it is going to give disease. Gutters have to be cleaned. Water tanks need not be cleaned !

So, let us realise that it is not the time for judging. "Judge not that you be not judged", Christ said ! Why ? Because the man who dares not show his face before the mirror, achieves nothing by breaking the mirror ! His face does not change ! He may break a hundred mirrors; we are all doing it all the time. Every man vents his hatred for himself by throwing stones on buses, breaking structures, robbing coconuts. We are venting our hatred for ourselves on other people whom we see, on whom we have a hold, who are vulnerable !!

And if you look at it in one way, the Master is the most vulnerable person, poor fellow ! My Master, I used to pity Him for His plight. It is a blasphemous thing I am saying; but I have pitied Him more than I have done anything else! Because when you have moved as intimately with the Master as I have moved with Him; experienced the sorrow that was His eternal share; experienced the loneliness that was His permanent companion; experienced the misery of His failure in His work, —

when He could not mould an abhyasi because the abhyasi was foolish enough to resist His Divine assistance - and seen Him at night when He could not sleep, and said, "These people come to me ! I don't know why they come to me ! They don't permit me to work on them. They don't listen to me. At least in their sleep let me do something." And He used to remain awake, and when they all are asleep, work on them !

So, ultimately if the Master gets anything it is our pity! And my idea is, let us at least have that for Him ! So don't think that you know what a Master is. None of us can possibly know it. Because in the puranas, it is said that Brahma and Vishnu wanted to see, to measure the height of Shiva. And one went down, and one went up. They could never find the limit. Because it has no limit !

Can you define a Master ? It is said in the Vedas, that if you say this is God, it is no longer God ! "Neti, Neti." It is much more so in the case of a Master, "If you say this is a Master, He ceases to be a Master." Because Mastery is as infinite, as unlimited, in scope, in conception, in powers, as Divinity itself ! One reason why we cannot know a Master, and why Master said, "Everybody comes to see me but nobody sees me", is because, in a sense, He was unknowable, He was unseeable, He was unperceivable. As we know an artist by his product, you can only judge a Master by His products, if you have the good fortune to be in that group.

So, you cannot judge the Master. But you can judge Him by what He produces ! You cannot judge a cook except by what he cooks ! Isn't it ? So, the only request that ultimately I desire to make to you is, whoever He may be, give him an opportunity to work, and then judge the result !

Let us not prejudge. Prejudgement is called prejudice. And it is the greatest sin in spirituality.

So, coming from the disillusionment of postponing today's work to tomorrow, I have in the end to request you, also, not to make the mistake of prejudging what should not be judged hastily. When the brinjal vegetable is still cold, in the pan, and you try to eat it, it is katcha (raw) ! How can you taste it ? Let it cook.

And who is to judge, and by what ? Judge him by the effect He has on you, the result He produces on you ! Because, ultimately, Master or no Master, He is nothing if He cannot change me ! Because He exists for me, I exist for Him. If a doctor cures you and kills me, for me he is a useless doctor ! What does it matter to me if nine hundred and ninety nine cases are successful but my case is going to be a failure ? Isn't it ?

So, the test of my Master is, what He did for me, what He could do for me, what He shall continue to do for me. So, the test for each one of you is what He is able to do for you, in you, with you.

Let me add one caution, that if it fails, it would not necessarily be His failure, it may be yours !

Thank you.

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REALITY UNVEILED

As the old statement goes, 'The truth is one', but we say so many things about it; describe it in so many ways. So, each one from the angle of his own experience, tries to describe what he has felt, what he has experienced, and hopes that he is on the path progressing to a stage when he shall have nothing to describe.

There has been in the minds of most abhyasis, an undue emphasis on experience. In the beginning — yes ! Many people have some experiences. I think most often it is granted deliberately by the Master to bring some sort of conviction into the minds of the new comers that there is something here. Now, food can be entirely good without any taste; really good food should be tasteless ! Taste has no special value to your nourishment or for your growth. Taste is something additionally imposed on food. This is something of a perversion that things should have splendour; things which are to be eaten should have taste; things which are to be heard should be couched in beautiful language; and even deities in temples should be bedecked in suitably beautiful form so that we can appreciate them.

So we are in that tradition where we have not been trained to accept Reality as such. We have been conditioned to accept things either tastefully decorated, or couched in acceptable language, or dressed suitably and, in that way, from hoary ages of the past, Reality has been covered up; Reality has been occluded, as it were,

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Talk at the Founder's day celebration of Tamilnadu state on 11th August 1985 at Salem.

and today we have to search for it in the mass of confusion, in the mass of beauty, in the confusion of language, so that our mind is no longer able to grasp Reality in its naked condition. Therefore the need for speeches and, much more important, the need for cleaning.

Now, we have all been hearing so much about the spiritual cleaning that the Master is doing, the Preceptors are doing, and that we ourselves are expected to do every day, in the evening. That is the internal cleaning of the samskaras which have already been formed. But we do not realise that we have to co-operate in a different way, in a continuous cleaning process, where we should try to rid ourselves of all these social and cultural conditionings of the past — that a thing must look beautiful to be really good, that food must taste well to be really good, that the language of the speaker must be brilliant for his thoughts to be good. All these small conditionings, we have to reject. I have come out of many lectures where many accepted speakers spoke brilliantly, but even as I came out of the hall and put on my chappals, I heard people asking each other, "What did he say?" and the reply was, "I don't know, but it was beautiful." I do not know how something can be beautiful when you do not even know what it was ! It has long been my suspicion, and now I am convinced of it too, that the beauty of language is used deliberately to confuse people and to prevent them from knowing that there is nothing to say. Similarly food is made attractive to look at because often it has no instrinsic value. You know all these tricks are being practised upon us to cheat us, to beguile us, and to continue to corrupt us, not without our knowledge, not without our co-operation, but with both our knowledge and our co-operation ! These tricks of the trade are being

practised upon us in hotels. from political platforms and, unfortunately, from religious platforms too. So this is a most unfortunate thing that in the name of Religion, the name of Divinity, we are allowing ourselves – we are allowing our children, we are training our children to allow themselves - to be cheated, to be lied to, to be corrupted, to be drawn further and further away from Reality, further and further away from the subtlety, from the utmost subtlety that Divinity is. You must forgive me if I appear to speak in very strong terms but this is the truth. The truth is always unpalatable particularly for those who claim to be orthodox. I don't know what the real meaning of orthodoxy is, but apparently those who are fooling themselves and fooling the public are the orthodox people. Well, let them have their orthodoxy. Let them cling to their illusions and artificial embellishments. If there is one person here who says he is not familiar with the corruption that is going on, left, right and centre, he is a liar. So if you want to be corrupt and a liar on top of it, it is your privilege. Human beings are free, and nobody can compel them to accept the truth, nobody can compel them to be even truthful. Today there is a growing awareness, appreciation, recognition of the fact that people seem to think that only if they are untruthful, only if they are corrupt, they can succeed. And even children are told, "Don't be a fool. If you behave this way, this way and this way you can be like pappa, who is a multi-millionaire with 17 properties here and others in the making in other cities; but if you are going to be truthful well, you will be pulling a rickshaw on the street." So, from the cradle we are training our children to be liars, so that they can be what we hope they will be -- successful citizens ! Not good citizens, but successful citizens. And to these are added slogans which are imported from the

West like, 'Nothing succeeds like success', 'That is true, which is believed by all'. You see, truth is not truth anymore, but that which you believe to be true is the truth! That which most people repeat again and again becomes the truth because we are in an age when the more the people that say something, the more truthful it becomes. The only answer I can give to this meaning of truth is a statement from Rudyard Kipling, where monkeys say, "We all say so, so it must be true." So all this talk about Reality, about Realisation, is a waste ! As Kannan pointed out, we are supposed to be some sort of fanatics or Nastikas because we don't worship in temples. That shows that not only are people corrupt, but they are unwilling to recognise how gross they have become, how self-deluded they have become; nobody is deluding us, we are allowing ourselves to be deluded; we prefer to be deluded. It is nice and comfortable to be deluded and lulled into a state of almost narcotic sleep where, instead of my being one with God - having God within me so that He is looking at my every thought, action, and every moment of my existence - I can be relaxed if I go to a temple somewhere. I go there once in two or three years, put in twenty rupees if I am poor, two and a half lakhs if I am rich, and thus try to salve my conscience. But you cannot cheat God. You can cheat yourselves. The greatest ignorance, the greatest foolishness, the greatest stupidity that we exhibit is in thinking that if we throw some money in the Hundi of a temple, we have got away with it. Got away with what ? Can we ever cheat God ? I believe what we need is more exposure to truth, more Reality thrown at us, not palliatives as in Allopathy, not pain-killers, not drugs to make us sleep. This is all that the religion of modern day is giving us !

So to this extent, my dear brothers and sisters, we have fallen. Now my Master Shri Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur, and His Master before Him, Lalaji Maharaj, have stated all these truths quite forcibly. Master has exposed in His book "Reality at Dawn" the most profound truths about religion, about gods, in absolutely unambiguous language. If somebody reads it and says he is confused, that confusion is deliberate. He does not want to understand. So whether you accept the truth or not, the truth remains what it is. The truth does not depend on your acceptance, does not need your acceptance. But we need the truth in our lives. That is why when people tell us lies we become so annoyed. But when we lie to others we think it is an achievement. Lying is a two-way transaction. How can you expect not to be lied to if you are telling lies all your life ? Can you consider it a prerogative of your existence that you can lie but you should not be lied to ? There is no law which says that. On the contrary, the Christian precept says, 'Do unto others as thou wouldst be done by.' If you want others to tell you the truth, start by telling the truth. If you want others to be charitable towards you, towards your mistakes, to your sins, be charitable first. If you want God to redeem you, start by redeeming others. Because what we broadcast from our hearts comes back to us as gifts from the Infinite. There is nothing that the Infinite can give us which we cannot give ourselves. It is a travesty of truth to say that God bestows blessings on us, or that God gives punishment. It is not God who punishes or blesses, in that sense. I would venture to say that He is far too busy to bother about each and every individual human being, and his actions ! God has no time, He has no interest. He has created us and it is for us to evolve up to Him. I cannot imagine a God who will stoop to punish us. As our elder brother Shri C. S. Ramakrishnan said, even rebirth is a

gift. We think of it as a sin, as a result of sin, as a curse upon us; but it is God's magnificent charity, His benevolence that says, "Have another chance." No law-giver on earth has ever given a second chance. The law punishes us exactly and it punishes us immediately. But as the old saying goes 'The mills of God grind slowly but surely'. The word 'slowly' here applies to His mercifulness which gives us aeons of time to redeem ourselves, to correct ourselves, to connect ourselves back to Him again. The word 'surely' means, that in the end there will come a time when we shall have to suffer the consequences of our own sins, of our own viciousness, of our corruption, not as a punishment from Him but as an act of self-condemnation imposed by ourselves upon ourselves.

So let us not just stop with hearing these lectures and talking about Reality, and buying 'Reality at Dawn'. We are not to be satisfied with Reality just at dawn but it should pervade all our 24 hour-existence. Let us be willing to face reality, the first reality we have to face being, "What am I ?" And then you know, it applies to all of us, to me as much as to you. And when we are able to see what we are, and to recognise the filth that lies inside us, and we are unable to bear that sight, as we should be if we have seen it, let us rush to the Master and say, "Master forgive me for all that I have done. I now hand my own self over to you so that you may do with my life something better than what I have done with it myself" ! Anyone who is not willing to do this, is only interested in hearing about Reality but not to achieve it; to speak about corruption perhaps but not to correct it in himself; to talk about telling the truth, but not in telling the truth himself. And to my mind this has gone on for centuries and centuries. I say this because of slogans like "Satyam Vada". I have

rarely come across these slogans, "Tell the Truth" anywhere else in the world. Because when you are telling the truth there is no need to tell you to tell the truth. So, other people may look up and cry "Satyam Vada" but a society pervaded by truth doesn't need them.

The first liberation is from the idea that I am a good person. As Master pointed out, there is no such thing as good Samskaras. As Babuji once said, "If you are in a golden cage it is no better than being in an iron cage or a bamboo cage or any sort of cage. A cage is a cage. The gold belongs to the owner who imprisoned you, and not to you. The bird doesn't enjoy the gold, it is still in the prison." So the first liberation is the liberation from the foolish idea that since I have donated so much to this temple, and I have done charity, and I am a good man, and I have not harmed anybody, I don't need anything else. Most people when we talk of Sahaj Marg, say "Sir, my conscience is clear." Well if it is **really clear**, I think he will be one in a hundred million people perhaps born once in a hundred thousand years. Let us give up all these ideas first. Let us understand that right action alone is what matters. Sahaj Marg does not recognise good action or bad action, whatever philosophy may say about it, whatever religion may say about it. There is no such thing as good action. There is only right action. And while it is right to feed a beggar who is at your door, you are no more entitled to any merit than he is in allowing you to feed him at your door. We should recognise that they do us a service by accepting what we think of as charity, which my Master says is nothing more than a human duty towards a suffering human being. So, dear friends, more than duty you have nothing else to do. Sahaj Marg doesn't say, "Do good." Sahaj Marg says, "Do what is necessary." Sahaj Marg doesn't say, "Be virtuous." Sahaj

Marg says, "Live such a life in which there is no creation of samskaras, good or bad." Sahaj Marg does not say "Be a saint." Sahaj Marg says "Live this life as it should be lived, and this life will lead you inexorably to the path on which the Goal can be achieved without even your consciousness that it is being achieved." So let us not confuse Sahaj Marg with religious precepts, and with slogans like "Satyam Vada" They are all right in their place. We are only concerned with working, thinking and acting in such a way that it proves us to be human beings who are interested in Divinisation, and who would go to that Goal without swerving from the path.

16

ADHERE TO ONE TEACHING, ONE GOAL

I learn that the question of 'What happens after death' is being discussed. I do not understand the question properly. But there seems to be some concern that, "If you are a liberated soul can you come back again ?" Is that correct ? Something like that ? Now, this question rises again and again. Because I have had this question asked in Europe also in some places. One boy asked me, "You are promising me a lot today ! And, if I am to come back after Mahapralaya again, what is the use ? You may as well not have liberation and continue with this life !"

So harbouring such thoughts, you know, — we seem to have 'Deergha Darshan' in a very negative sort of way ! It is like saying, "suppose I am to become a criminal, and I am to go to jail, why not I go to jail today itself ?" Because at some stage everybody is a criminal, — if not in the past, at least in the future. It is like saying, "If I am to go on a holiday and come back to the house, I might as well not go on a holiday ! If I am to eat, and become hungry again tomorrow, I might not as well eat !" Isn't it ? And, "If I am to live and to die again, why should I live at all ? Let me commit suicide !" So it is a very morbid thought, that I should not aspire to change this condition, because there is a possibility of that condition reverting to this condition again ! So it is like saying, "Today is going to become 'tonight'; so let me close all the windows and make it dark, now itself !"

Human logic, human sensibility says, "Be in the Sun, when there is sunlight; Be in the dark when it is darkness.

Talk at Nellore on 26th August 1985.

And make both the same." I am surprised people are talking today of Gita and all these things — make siddha and Buddha same, make this and that same; make wealth and poverty the same; but you do not want to make life and death the same ! You do not want to make liberation and the state of non-liberation the same !

We should study Master's thoughts carefully, without going into extraneous systems of philosophies. There is an unfortunate tendency in the educated people to mix philosophic systems, and confuse the whole issue. You know in the cinema world this is a very common practice, the face of an actress is merged with the voice of another person who is a good singer, and we get a composite woman, and we think that a beautiful woman should sing well. But rarely does a beautiful woman sing, or a good musician appear beautiful ! That is a composite which the cinema people do, to exploit fools like us who are willing to get deceived again. In reality there is no such composition. Reality is one. It cannot be mixed with anything else. It is so with every thought of Sahaj Marg and the Sahaj Marg philosophy and the truth that Master has placed before us. We should interpret Sahaj Marg by Master's teachings, not bringing other considerations, other philosophies, other saints; because all of us know that Babuji Maharaj never referred to another. He referred to some other philosophies very rarely. In fact He has written that at the age of 16 or 17, He called for the book Mill's "Utilitarianism". He read a few pages and put it away. Because He said, "If I keep this, I will repeat these thoughts and my originality will be lost." So to that extent you have to be pure ! You see, sometimes we talk of 'Chastity'. We have certain conceptions of "Chastity". But the total conception of chastity is "the Guru, His teachings, His Goal — they *alone* are mine". I know there

is a system of practice in south India, where, if you are listening to another Guru's teachings, they say you are committing "adultery through ears" ! That is another form of chastity : "Listen not to somebody else's teachings, lest your teachings be corrupted." That is why there used to be an old saying : "After being with your Guru, go back straight home. Do not wander on the streets, because you may be led astray, somewhere on the way !" In our old Samskriti also, it is said "Go to the temple and get back home. Don't come via this street or that street. Who knows what is lurking in those streets to catch you ?"

So it is a very dangerous thing, to make a 'kichhdi' sort of philosophy by putting together all that you have learnt from the past, and trying to make a composite picture of a Reality, that does not exist. You know, for example, in Sahaj Marg the concept of 'Mukti' does not exist. Babuji does not even refer to it, because He has often said that liberation is a child's play. He says, "I can give it with the wink of an eye." Just wink, and the man is liberated; and He saw that Lalaji could do it; He studied it and He Himself was able to do it. So where is this liberation ? What is this condition "Mukti", which you are all talking so much ? It is a child's play. It is a toy in the hands of a spiritual saint. So we should not talk of "Mukti", "Mumukshuthva", etc. — that is all gone. We have surpassed all those philosophies, as we must. Evolution means surpassing previous conditions, acquiring more of wisdom, more of abilities ! What is evolution, but the transcendence of the past into the present, and from there into the future !

So any man who has an unnecessary hold on the past, and has a need for this past to fulfil the present, is still living in the past. And he is afraid to give up the past,

because he does not know what the present contains. So it is fear which makes us hold to the past, the traditions of the past, the teachings of the past. There is no disrespect in this statement. Because, why are there so many Vedas for instance ? Why are there the six systems of philosophy ? Should not one be enough ? And most importantly, why should an 'avatara' come again and again and again ? Why not he once and for all be able to give one transmission, and change the whole universe, and then keep quiet in his Home in heaven ? Because there is the need. And you see the evolution, in the 'avatara' trend itself; from Mathsya to Koorma to the Varaha, you know, on and on. It develops from the fish to the human form, and then to the Divine form. That is how we are developing. As we develop, the 'avataras' come to match our level. Because, you cannot be taught otherwise. A primary school teacher cannot teach a College student. You always need a teacher of a higher level than our own knowledge. Otherwise he cannot teach us. That is why an 'avatara' comes, bringing with him a knowledge that is advanced far beyond our time. Our own Babuji has said in Munich, "My books are not for today. The present generation will not understand it. They are for the future." Why ? Because they come from a time far in advance of us. You teach every child things that which he does not know, so that he can understand it at some future time; few days later; few weeks later; few months later; sometimes it takes even sixty years to understand, what the teacher taught in the school. So, if you are to learn, you must have a teacher who is an advanced person; and the more he is advanced, the better. And if it is Divinity itself, it means it is coming here from the Ultimate — the Ultimate in time, the Ultimate in space, the Ultimate in all potentialities itself ! So when you start limiting these

concepts, with foolish things, childish things, like "Mukti", and wonder whether you have to come again, I say, "why not ?" Suppose, Babuji did not come to us, suppose Lalaji did not come to us, what will we be ? Surely Lalaji did not need to come ! Babuji has said that, this is the first life in which He had taken the 'sthoola sarira' (physical body) ! He came because of His 'Karuna' for us. So we must remember that there are two aspects involved in our coming here again and again : One is like us, who come because of the bondage of the 'samskar'. We have no choice. We have to come; it is not a question of choice. We are pushed here. The other is the 'Divya Swaroopis' (divine forms); you can call them saints — Divinity itself, who, out of compassion for its own creation, takes on the form, suffers with us, laughs with us, enjoys with us, teaches us, and goes back ! Now suppose Divinity did not have this compassionate aspect to descend again and again, to teach us and lift us up, where would we be ? We would be wandering in the mire of ignorance and sin, all our lives, life after life ! So let us not be afraid of coming back. On the contrary, I would say, it is a matter of great sorrow. And, it would also reflect ingratitude, basest ingratitude, if a person who is an abhyasi, has been given the highest by the Master; and later on says, "Babuji, I do not want to come back again to this world." You should be not only prepared, but you should be willing to come again and again. Babuji says, "Go to 'Bhooloka' (earth) and do this work." "Yes Master." Next instant I am there. You all see some cinema pictures, where Sage Narada comes from there, and where Lord Narayana Himself comes here, and we are praising : "Wah, Wah ! You see what Divine Grace !" If Divine Grace did not descend, where would we be ? How would we ascend ?

So please do not have this foolish idea, that we do not like to come again. Babuji once asked me "Will you be ever with me ?" I said, "Babuji, YES." He said, "In hell too ?" I said, "What is there ? When you are there how can it be hell ?" It is like the lamp saying, "Will you go with me wherever I go ?" "Yes." "Even in the darkness ?" "Naturally !" Because when I go with the lamp itself where can there be darkness ? Can there be heaven where no God is, and can there be hell where God is ? There is little difference.

So we do not want these funny ideas of coming back, of being afraid of coming back; -- Life is a glorious thing wherever we exist, if we live it well. There is no special glory in the Divine existence; there is no misery in the physical existence. They are both our creations. I can make this existence a Divine existence, and I can be a fool in the Divine World and drop back again. There are stories which have given proofs for these things, that one who ascended, descended again for some foolish act. All that we should seek is His True Presence, His Eternal Presence within us, and to be with Him wherever He is. So this is the greatness of spirituality.

And second thing, about 'Divya Shakti' (Divine power). In our Master's teachings, there is no such thing as "Divya Shakti" – whatever the 'Shastras' may say, whatever the philanthropists may say, whatever any one else ..... may say. In the Ultimate, there is no shakti (power), there is no knowledge, there is nothing. So what is the inference ? I remember once Babuji was talking about His own powers being distributed : "Who is going to take it from me ?" This was, you know, in 1965 or 1966. And He was quite unhappy ! He said, "For all the work that I have done in the South, I should have produced hundred Personalities in South ! Unfortunately I have not

been able to produce even one ! And I am concerned what I would do with powers that are in me ! When I leave this body I will ultimately have to leave it." I said, "Why ? Can't you take it with you ?" He said, "No; powers have to be left here. Nobody can take powers with him." So, when even the liberated soul cannot take powers with him, where is the question of God having power ? That is why He has to descend here as 'Avatara', take the power that is here, and work on evil that is here; destroy the evil, re-establish the 'Dharma', protect the 'Dhaarmics' (righteous) and go back leaving the powers, until the next 'avatara' comes. Like the rich man has to leave his money and his property behind, even the elevated Souls at the highest level have to leave their powers behind. They cannot take powers with them. So there is no power, except at the human level. This is the secret as to why God has to descend, because, where there is no power He cannot work ! Here He comes down, accepts the power, accepts a form, accepts the job, performs it, and goes back. This is a proof that Power is only here, not there ! That is why even power politics is on earth, not in heaven — fortunately for us !

The whole object of my speaking to you is not to explain the questions. They are irrelevant. Because sometimes, you understand them yourself. It is to emphasise the need to speak through one teaching, and not bring in the other considerations, however great their relevance to the past may have been. We are not concerned with it. Because the Vedas were written twenty five thousand years back; they are not more important than Sahaj Marg, which is today's teaching. The new one is not bad, the old one is not good, just by virtue of their newness or the oldness. As Kabir said, "If the old things have to be taken care of by God first, then all the

mountains would have been liberated long ago." "If the 'Ganga-Jal' (water of Ganga) is to give us 'Mukti', every fish and crocodile in the river would have been liberated long ago !" "If stones have to be worshipped, it is better to worship the grinding stone which produces wheat flour which we use for cooking." This is what Kabir said !

So, the Ganga is useful to one who has achieved that point of liberation, that when he falls into the river he does not come out again. That can be achieved right in your own backyard — in your own pond or well water, if you have the capacity to do it. Unfortunately with mythology to back us, with stories in our puranas to back us, we have mystified all these things. We have given them a value beyond the truth that resides in them. For instance, the river Ganga is the same, but the water has not been the same ever since it started flowing. Everyday the water is changing; every minute the water is changing; which water is it that is to give you 'Mukti' ? And as my friend said, once I dip into the river, it is there and it is not there also; then why should not a bath in the sea give me 'Mukti' ? Because, after all the Ganga water is there also. So it is like this spirit, the 'atman', which has no quality, no form, no name, nothing. When it enters a body it takes its attributes. So, similarly we have the various things, you know. It has its own powers. All these forms have their own powers. The Ultimate has no power, yet having no power, from there everything comes ! This is the truth of Sahaj Marg as taught by Lalaji, and then perfected by Babuji. People hear this truth, but they cannot understand it. It is like saying, "Sir, how did this tree come from this seed ? What is there in the seed ? " Surely, the tree is not in the seed. But without the seed the tree cannot be there. Similarly the 'Para tatva', as we call it, it has nothing in it — no power, no knowledge, no qualities, yet,

the whole universe is its eternal presence. That presence we want to bring into ourselves in Sahaj Marg, by the Guru's grace — by His transmission.

So please stick to Sahaj Marg. Read Sahaj Marg books. Understand Sahaj Marg teachings. Comparisons are unnecessary. As I said, (sometimes in the past too) Sahaj Marg stands on its own two legs. We do not need any authority from any other systems of philosophy, any other teachings, any other 'puranas', even the Vedas. It is no disrespect; I bow in respect to all the past acharyas. They have themselves gone, and handed over things to us. You see it is like this baton that you get in the Relay race. It has no power except that it symbolises our position in the race. If you drop it, the race is finished. But the man who is carrying it is different. He comes with a different force. He comes from different systems. His powers are different; eternally they are changing.

17

LISTEN TO THE HEART

In the Christian tradition it is said, you have eyes but you see not; you have ears but you hear not; things like that. I used to think that Christ was very uncharitable when He said that. But after I listened to our speeches, in place after place, I am convinced it is true. The speeches are all predictable and are invariably on what is the panthathi, what is Sahaj Marg, what is cleaning, how to meditate, how to sit etc. In my 22 years with Babuji Maharaj in this Mission, I must have heard this at least one thousand times ! And I wonder what our listeners do, when they sit in front of us ! Because, obviously they are listening to us — but do they hear anything ? Christ said, "You have ears but you hear not"; He did not say, "You do not listen." We listen, but we do not hear anything. Because our attention is always somewhere else. A poet says : "My words fly up; my thoughts remain below. Words without thoughts never to heaven go." So I suspect, like that, we bring our bodies, to hear this lecture, but we leave our minds elsewhere. And further proof is that everytime there are some people asking questions. "What exactly is meditation ?" And once Babuji was very upset, when in a preceptors' meeting, one who had been a preceptor for fifteen years, wanted to know — 'What is Transmission' ! And of course, Babuji did not answer. He was very upset. One could see it in His face. He was so upset that He did not answer. He said, "Secretary saab, answer." And there again I had to, you know, sort of fill

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Concluding talk at Nellore on 26th August 1985.

up the gap. And later on, when we were back in His room, He said, "I wonder what this preceptor has been doing for the last fifteen years, when he does not know what is Transmission ?" It is not a criticism on preceptors. It is a general criticism on human nature that we are never completely in one place; we are never wholly in one place. We go to the temple, our heart is in the house. We go to the school, our heart is in the playground. We go to the office, the heart is at home. And even people who recite the Vedas, — you know, the 'Poojaris', the 'purohits', they can go on reciting the Vedas hour after hour, day after day, without missing one word, — they do not know the meaning.

I think, we have become conditioned, in some way, to be able to listen without hearing, to be able to see without really seeing what is going on. Because, once I observed that when Babuji entered the hall, many people did not know that He had come. This was in Shahjahanpur — Basant Panchami day ! And I had to bring Babuji on the dais, and in one corner, one section of people were still talking, chatting, and they did not even know that Master had arrived. We are all anxiously sitting, waiting for the Master's Presence, but we are so inattentive, that when He actually comes before us, we do not know that He is there. And then somebody has to get up and make an announcement : "Babuji Maharaj has come. Please be quiet. He is going to start meditation in a few minutes." And then occasionally people are also upset, "Why I was not told in advance that Babuji is coming; I would have been more attentive."

This is nothing new, because Babuji Himself has said that in Lalaji's times, when He would go to the Bhandara and sit right at the back — often Lalaji would sit down and start transmitting without saying anything, and He

was the only person who became alert and sat in meditation. And Lalaji Saheb used to tell Him, "Ramchander, you are the only person who knows what I am doing and when I am doing. All are sitting like this and they know nothing." So this is nothing new. So, we need not be too unhappy. It is not unique to today's people or today's society. But at the same time, it is tragic that humanity can go on for hundreds of thousands of years, developing if anything, greater and greater ability to be not alert, greater ability to not listen, greater ability to not see !

I think our qualities are being developed in negative directions. And in one way, it is called callousness. We are callous, when we see somebody brutally beaten on the street and we can just cover our eyes, and walk away pretending we have not seen anything. We see a man's pocket being picked by another man; still ignore it and walk away pretending we have not seen it. Because we do not want to be involved. If you see a man beating his wife on the street, and if you try to stop him doing it, you have to be involved in that; the man might beat you; or if there is a police complaint, you have to go to the Station, give a panchanama and so on; so it is easier to pretend that we have not heard or seen these things, and keep moving !

This training seems to have permeated into our spiritual life, where because perhaps one-half of me says that I have to reach the destination, my goal, the other half says, "well what is wrong with this life ? It is so beautiful; there are so many things to be enjoyed, so many pleasures not yet tasted; what is wrong with this life ?"

So it seems that there is this dichotomy in our make-up, so that even though we come to listen, we choose not to listen. And by an act of deliberate will, or by some sort

of closing the window of awareness on one side, we register our presence, without anything registered inside us. Our presence is registered, nothing more. We neither listen nor do; because I think, I suspect, the cause is the same, that : If you were to really listen to the Master or the people who are speaking to you and if you are really to register these things in your heart, you become committed to follow it. So here again, it is very useful and very helpful, to see without seeing, to hear without hearing, so that we can satisfy the conscience that, "as an abhyasi I was present at the meeting; as discipline demanded, I sat through the lectures, whether I understood them or not; and thus, having fulfilled my duty, my Master is bound to take me to the destination, even though I have done all this without any sense of commitment, either to Him, or to the teachings, or to the Mission, or to myself." So, if you are not willing to commit yourselves, I have a suspicion that the Master is not going to commit Himself to us; because as Babuji has said, very very clearly, that one who commits himself to the sadhana, — to him the Master has to commit; to his progress the Master is committed; to his welfare the Master is committed. But if we just come and register our presence, I do not think that the Master has any commitment to us, in the way that He is bound to lift us up to this highest Goal of human evolution.

So, I am just telling you this to suggest very humbly, that we can commit the Master to our progress, to our welfare, to our spiritual evolution, only by our committing ourselves to His teachings. This sort of superficial listening and hearing, like we have done all our lives, in 'Kathakalakshepams', 'Pravachanams' — when we come out, we do not know what had happened — that will not do. It will not do for those people who want to

progress. For the others of course it is all right, you see, because there are many people who wish to pass time for lack of anything better to do; or out of fear of doing something worse, they come to such places and listen to some things and are happy that they did not do any mischief. Because, after all, much mischief can be done in half-an-hour !

That is one aspect. Now the second aspect is, even for those who are committed, few seem to know what is the Goal. I mean few have even enquired, what exactly are we here for : "Yes. I know what is meditation. I sincerely listened to what is being said. I have read the books. I know how to sit; how to ignore unnecessary thoughts. I know what to do during cleaning. My preceptors tell me, the Master tells me that my condition is good. But, what is this all about ?" Even after many years, people are confused. They say, "What is Divinisation ?" Now I think, it was one of our speakers this morning who said that we do not become Gods. But we become God-like. Now what is "God-like" ? Unless you know what is a God, you do not know what is 'God-like'. Isn't it ? It is like saying "It is like halwa", when I have never eaten halwa ! So, is a man who is telling you what is your Goal, competent to tell you what is that Goal ? He can do so only by knowing for himself what that Goal is, or by having achieved it. So I would suggest that the Master is the only person competent in that sense, to speak about the Goal. For the rest of us it is something in the future. It is something in the future, in time; it may not be tomorrow; it may not be the day after; it may be this minute too. Future does not mean an unspecified future. What that Goal is, the Master knows. He has achieved it; He is in relation with that Ultimate; He is in permanent contact with it; He is part of it; or may be He is the whole of it; whatever it be. So, we

have to adopt a trusting nature as far as the Goal is concerned, without asking to be told in advance what that Goal is.

You know, I have often wondered about, say, education. We tell a child, "it is necessary to be educated"; and then we bribe it to study. Most of the educative processes are achieved by bribery; whether it be with a biscuit, or with the promise of a wrist-watch if you pass the exam; or a holiday in Ooty if you come first — it is bribery. It is not corruption; it is bribery. Why do we do it ? We don't do it with any ulterior or mala fide motives; but we are sincerely interested in the welfare of that child, who is our responsibility. So we have to tell it slowly, make promises, give gifts, show resentment occasionally, to encourage it on the path of education; so that one day it will realise as it grows up, that this is what education was for ! You see, you have to be educated before you know the value of education ! Can a man on the street who has no education tell you what is the value of education ? It takes a rich man to know what riches can buy ! A rickshaw puller cannot tell you what wealth can buy. He can imagine so many things; but he does not know. It is a rich man who knows what money CAN buy, and unfortunately, tragically, what all it cannot buy too ! Similarly the educated man, if he is really wise, knows what education can achieve, and the immense things that education cannot achieve. It takes a really wise man to know what wisdom cannot penetrate ! The B.Sc's and M.Sc's are no use in these things, you see ! Because he is not wise, he has only got facts, he has only mugged up facts to get a degree, a degree on the wall ! It is as good as the preceptor's certificate if it is not backed by that wisdom which says, "Go ahead ! This is not the end."

So, real wealth tells you the limitations of wealth. Real education shows you what it can do, and the limitations of that education, or the limitations of that wisdom. Similarly you have to be a Sadhak first, before you can know what can be achieved, and what cannot be achieved ! Babuji put it very simply : He said, "You want an M.A. degree, and then you want to start learning A, B, C. Start learning A, B, C; and automatically, you will get the degree !" So practice comes first, achievement comes as a result of that practice.

Now we all want to be divinised, without knowing what is Divinisation. You see, I will tell you a small story — at one stage, Babuji forbade me from telling it. Somebody very close to Him (Babuji) was passing away; an extreme case as they say. And, He was called. He was sitting in his room, He was called out to see whether He could do something. And when He came, He found this, what we call, 'Yama Paasam' you know, the noose of Lord Yama, around the neck of this person whom He loved very much. And, He was enraged ! He said, "My people, and this 'Yama Paasam' around the neck of that fellow !" And He shattered it with one Transmission ! He just said, "I disintegrated the Paasam !" And then He was adjusting Himself to destroy Yama himself ! And then, Voice came from Lalaji : "Yes, you can do it ! Not one Yama, you can destroy anything in creation you like ! But beware, you have to take over the duties of Yama !" Then Babuji laughed you know, in His own inimitable way, and said, "Which fool will accept that dirty job ?" I said, "Babuji, he is supposed to be a god !" He said, "Yes, but he is a sweeper among gods ! Because he takes away all the filth of humanity." Yama does not come to the 'Punya Athmas ' ! He comes to the 'Papa Athmas' ! And for the ordinary 'Papathmas', he sends his Dhoothas, you see

(messengers) ! For the real papi (sinner), for the great papis (sinners) only, he comes ! So it is a signal honour, if Yama comes to us personally ! You see, it is like the Income tax fellow coming to raid our house ! Or the bootlegger who comes to our house to collect the bribe, and being followed by the prohibition man to arrest us. You see, one way, it is an honour ! You find today people whose houses have been raided become more popular : "Raid ayee poyindee, Sir ! Seventeen and a half lakhs !" -- The implication being that there are other seventeen and a half lakhs, or thirty five lakhs not yet recovered ! So he is really a rich man. So, if a man can get raided and lose seventeen and a half lakhs to the police, or the revenue officials or the customs authorities, and still have his three cars and air-conditioners and his refrigerators and everything, it is a sign of signal wealth. So, similarly if Yama comes personally, I mean it must be something about which even the gods must be wondering ! "Aha, Yama going himself personally today on his buffalo. There must be some great guy who is there on earth. Let us go and see !"

So, you see a god has responsibilities. High responsibilities, like you say Saraswathi is for knowledge, Lakshmi for wealth ! Or the lowest, or the gutter type of responsibility as that of poor Yama ! Which do we want ? Obviously we don't want responsibilities ! Most of us I suspect, are in the spiritual field, so that we can bask in the Guru's Grace, without having to do anything ! We don't want to work, we don't want to ..... I mean most of us are here, as an escape from responsibilities, from duties ! And then, when we find that here also there are duties and responsibilities, in some way we feel hurt and cheated ! Some people feel cheated, you know : "Why didn't that old man tell me there are duties and responsibilities here ?

I thought this is free ! We can do what we like, we can behave as we like ! Well, half an hour in the morning, ten minutes in the evening, two minutes at night, well, I am prepared for that, you see ! But I didn't know that my commitment to honesty has to be total, my commitment to morality has to be total, my commitment to the Master has to be total. And, I have to give Him my heart ! Who told me these in the beginning ?" So these questions are asked. I am not telling something from imagination. People are asking these questions : "Sir, why didn't you say when we first came to you that this is a total commitment ?" I said, "Nice. To whom ?" They said, "to the Master !" I said, "Nonsense. What has Master to do with you, and your wonderful heart ? Have you a heart at all first ? Look for it !" Then they get more upset ! I said, "I mean it ! Do you have a heart ? Because, in society I know how you are represented. You are being called a heartless fellow. You have been called a victimiser ! Your wife questions your heart. Your children don't think you have a heart ! Where is your heart ? And, the man with no heart, what does he do here ? Where is the possibility of committing when you have nothing to lose ?" Then they say, "No, no, Sir, I assure you I have a heart." I said, "Physically, yes ! Perhaps you had a heart attack, so you know it better than I do." Still coming back to the same question, "To whom are you committed ?" Then he is bewildered. He says, "No, no, but everybody says I have to be committed to the Master. I have to be committed to the practice." Then I said, "Friend, you are committed to yourself, to your progress. It is not for His sake, that the Master asks for your heart ! It is not for His sake that the Master asks you to commit yourself to this practice. It is not for His sake that He wants you to commit yourself totally to honesty, ethics, morality ! It is for YOUR sake !" Therefore, the commitment is to yourself.

You see, the idea of commitment, and to whom that commitment is made, and the degree to which that commitment is made, nobody has understood ! And when they understand also, they get frightened : "What is this commitment ? Does it mean I cannot do this, I cannot enjoy that ?" You know in our country (to go off the track a little) the family planning programmes have been great failures, because our only commitment is to pleasure ! Any technique that is advertised by the Government, this fellow will come with his demand, head-scratching .... and very very delicately pose a question, and it generally has to do with pleasure. So our commitment is only to pleasure ! And here when we come, and we are told, "Rise before dawn, eat from pious earnings", and these sort of things, the ten commandments (ten maxims) you see. He says, "What happens to my commitments to myself ?" — not knowing, that it is for a higher commitment to yourself which you are seeking, and not your lower commitment which was an animal commitment, for animal fulfilment, for animal pleasures.

And even after you tell him, he has this idea, "A bird in hand is worth two in the bush. Let me enjoy something here ! Who knows about the hereafter, you see ! A good fling at life here ! Well, let us see what the future holds ! People say there is another 'janma', people say there is 'naraka', there is 'swarga', who has seen these things ?" When you tell them, "My dear friend, it is not the future or the next life ! You get drunk today, you have a headache tomorrow, you have cirrhosis of the liver next year. It is within your foreseeable future, which you can see yourself. You don't need a god to come and prove it to you. You don't need Yama to come and prove it to you. It is there for you to see. Or, if you cannot or don't want to see it in yourself, look at your neighbour ! Look at your

cousin ! Look at your so and so, you see." So in some way, there is an unwillingness to see what is truth, there is an unwillingness to commit to the truth because the truth is often unpalatable. All because, there is a fear that "in the aspiration for something which is promised, may be, we will lose that which we have now. Bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

These ideas of Divinisation we hear, and we say, "Yes ! One more speaker we have listened to today ! And, of course, he spoke beautifully, you see. There is no question about it." That is a grudging sort of remark, to satisfy the speaker ! But no speaker is useful, until his speech, or his talk, the things contained therein, have been practised and translated into reality in our own lives ! As Master has said so often, "People come to see me but nobody sees me", — He does not add, "People come to hear me, but nobody hears me." He should have added that too ! Because many people used to go to Him and ask, "Babuji, what should I do in such and such a situation ?" And even before He answers, they are talking to the friend who had just come with them. Babuji you know, is about to answer, then He looks at him, and starts smoking His hukkah; because there is no use ! People want to ask questions but don't want to receive the answers, because they know the answers ! It is not as if we don't know the answer when we ask questions. We know the answer. Because we don't like the answer given by our heart, we ask somebody else, hoping that he will give a different answer. But when you go to the Master, you know He can give you only one possible answer; so, you talk to your neighbour and avoid getting the answer. You have asked the questions, your duty is done. You have not received the answer, your interests are fulfilled. You can go back home, self-satisfied, with a 'laddu' or something which

you buy in the market, and which has been offered as Prasad. So, our Sadhana remains ! And the years that we have spent in Sadhana (I mean mostly, I won't say by all, but by most of us, most of the time) are frittered away like this in foolish fantasies, in self delusion; thinking that the Master is happy with us, because we have paid three visits to Him, we have had the Prasad offered to Lalaji, we have asked Him the proper question. Our interest is satisfied because we have not heard the answers; therefore we are not committed to listen to anything; to doing anything; He is there, we are here. The whole thing is being ritualised into another idol pooja, idol worship, temples !

I want to tell once again what I have been telling everywhere — that temple worship is popular not because we are 'bhakthas'. It is popular because there we have a form of God, who is fixed, who is immovable; and who is where He is, He can be left there conveniently, to be visited occasionally at our choice, when the need is there, bribe Him with a coconut and two bananas, conscience salved, come back home and start writing your black accounts or doing your misdeeds all over again — in the hope, sometimes with the conviction, that "My duty to God is fulfilled, so He cannot possibly harm me !"

So, the tendency to make an idol out of the Master, and a temple out of His residence, continues not because we don't know what we are doing; but because it is the most useful way in which we have to attack religion. "Leave Him where He is; to be called up, to be called upon, when we need, with minimum expense to Him with minimum expense to ourselves. No commitments on either side. Society is satisfied. Relations are happy : "My husband is a God-fearer. He goes to the temple every morning." Friends say, "You have not seen him, Sir ! He does nothing without going to the temple." And we hope

God is satisfied with these explanations that 'he is a true bhaktha; because, all said and done, he does visit me once in a way !' Because Krishna says very conveniently, in the 'Gita' "Even if you think of Me, I am there." One Telugu speaker once told me, "When you say Rama, even when you say Ra, He comes because in Telugu 'Ra' means come !" You see, how convenient we have made these languages, and these names, to fool ourselves. No God is fooled.

We have become adepts at fooling ourselves, cheating ourselves, deluding ourselves. And, these 'Sampradayas' of the past, these traditions of our society, have been inculcated in us, which we accept longingly, willingly, because they are beneficial to us to continue our life of corruption, of ease, without doing anything about it; and yet having a conscience !

Today even black-marketeers say, you know, "I have done no harm, Sir ! Why does this thing come to me ?" I don't know what exactly they mean by 'doing no harm' when a man sells rice at twenty five rupees a kilo in times of famine, and considers it 'no harm', but genuine and legitimate profit, — you see we have perverted even the idea of morality that "when I do something with my money and it earns me a profit, however high, it is legitimate !"

So, we have twisted our ideas of morality, to suit our morals. We are not living by moral principles ! We have twisted moral principles to suit the standard of life that we are living. If somebody says, "Why are you drinking ?" "Sir, everybody is doing it today ! Who is not drinking ?" "Why are you cheating ?" "Who is not cheating ?" "Why did you bribe the minister ?" "Sir, today nothing can be done without bribery, you try it !" You see how easy, how facile this is — 'that everybody is doing it, and so I am also

doing it.' I mean when you say everybody is going to hell, you are also to be prepared. You have lost your breath. There is a wailing on your back, and also on your front. Then he says, "But what have I done that everybody else is not doing ?" They are genuinely bewildered, you see ! "How can I be singled out for punishment ?" But they don't understand that all the others also are being similarly punished — not by any Deity, but by themselves — because you have your conscience which you have to answer; this is God.

So, that brings me to the concluding aspect of spirituality, "What is God ? Where is God ?" It is not as if there is somebody sitting in heaven, you know, waiting to say, "This you did – it is wrong. This you did — it is right!" That God who is going to be answered by me, and whom I have to answer without fail, whom even death cannot escape, is here, in my heart, my conscience; which, when it develops we call the higher Self, the Divine Self; which is the Master seated in the heart. Him I cannot escape, because He is within me ! I need not go to a temple, or I can go deliberately at one O'clock when I know it is closed and say, "Sir, I made every effort to go there; but the temple was closed. What can I do ?" But this temple is never closed ! And here, the God who lives, resides in me, is Myself, as He should be. This is what I am, as I am now.

So, we have the two ends, an enormous stick of life, — the Divine end coiled up within my corrupt human self, telling me from inside, "This is what you have to become. Don't do this. Don't do that !" And we coolly say, "Shut up ! My priest says, I can do this because I have given him a hundred rupees donation ! My doctor says, 'No harm in drinking, the cirrhosis of the liver is far away.' Who the hell are you to tell me from here ? Shut up."

So, we have shut our hearts up, and because our hearts are closed, we have become incapable of love, we are incapable of honesty, we are incapable of charity, mercy, all the values associated with human life. Therefore a Master has to come to open the hearts up, with His first transmission. And then come all these problems. People who come genuinely, they stop after some time, because they now find the heart is open. It is a terrible thing, you see. It says, "Love", and he doesn't want to love ! It says, "Give" and he doesn't want to give ! It says, "Be honest", and he doesn't want to be honest ! And some of them come and ask us, "Sir, what shall I do ? You know, so long I have done this and this and this and it has given me so much profit. I also made a donation when I went to Babuji you see. But this year what shall I do ? Because I feel that this is wrong ?" And, if you tell him, "It is wrong", he says, "I didn't come to you for that answer ! If you had told me 'Double the donation, multiply it ten times, a hundred times,' I would have been willing to do it !" He would like me to say "Go ahead. This is after all a worldly thing. See, there is no God in judgement." But how can I tell him that, when his heart is telling him that he is wrong, though I may be willing to co-operate with him. Suppose a big businessman says, "Sir, I am willing to give you ten lakhs this year out of my profits, if you will permit me to do black marketing"; even supposing I am prepared to say "Yes", his heart does not permit him ! Therefore he dies of heart attack after two years ! The heart just stops ! It says, "My dear friend, I have co-operated with you for forty eight years. Last three years, I have been telling you again and again, 'Don't do this, Don't do this, Don't do this'. You have not listened to my voice ! I might as well not work, not be with you." It stops and the man is dead. Hearts don't stop for nothing. They stop, when we allow

them to speak and we don't listen. It is like an advice you know; you go to a friend repeatedly and ask, "what should I do ?" And he tells you the advice and you don't listen to him. Next time when you go, and he says, "Well, you see what is the use of this coming to me again and again ? I have told you so many times that you should know it. It is better our relationship is not spoiled. Better you don't ask me !" Our friendship is gone. Now, this friendship, the most intimate friendship on which my life depends, on which my future eternal life depends, that stops ! Because I don't listen to this voice, which is my most intimate friend, who is my real lover, who is my real God; and one day He goes to sleep ! And He goes to sleep eternally !

So, if we want to be spiritual, let us learn to listen, let us learn to hear what is being said, translate it into practice fearlessly ! Because you know, this is the only path which is fearless. Everywhere else, it is a fear ! 'When I do something wrong I have got to be afraid not of somebody else, but of myself, that I should not repeat it in a bigger way, you see !' A man who has committed a murder once does not bother about a second murder. It becomes very easy. His sin, his capacity to sin, his capacity to do vicious things, increases. And concurrently, the voice of the conscience decreases, so that one day he becomes the utmost, the absolute sinner, and the conscience is totally silent. There are no allowances made any more. And at that stage, forgive me if I say it, I beg to differ from all the spiritual leaders who have said, "At any moment a man can be redeemed." I believe when a man is a total sinner and he has no conscience at all, it is my conviction that he is beyond redemption. So, at least let us stop before we reach that limit !

I would also be pardoned for saying that our satsangh is not composed of saints. I mean, saints have no business here. If they are saints, they should not be here. It is precisely because we are not saints, we are here, hoping that some day we will achieve that level; but we have to work for it; we have to start listening carefully, we have to start practising carefully; set all fears aside, of what will happen to this beautiful life of mine, my bungalows, my cars, all these things, you see. Everything has to go, if it has to go ! If Master is benevolent, benevolent enough to say, "Well, keep it; I shall allow you to keep it and yet progress", that is our good fortune ! If not, we have to be prepared to let all these things go.

That utmost sacrifice has to be made, that 'I am prepared to sacrifice all the comfort, all the joys, all the pleasures of this life, for that one thing which is Eternal, Immutable, Absolute'. So if this conviction is not there, spiritual value has no meaning, spiritual life has no meaning.

Thank you.

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